



1. The first part of the document is a list of the names of the persons who have been appointed to the various offices of the city government.

SIR HENRY STEWART CUNNINGHAM, K.C.I.E.

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HENRY STEWART CUNNINGHAM, 1877

*From a portrait by W E Miller*

[Frontispiece

# SIR HENRY STEWART CUNNINGHAM, K.C.I.E.

BY MARGARET M. VERNEY

LONDON  
JOHN MURRAY, ALBEMARLE STREET W.

1923

“ And as the roll of Honour’s Scroll  
Page after page is written,  
May Harrow give the names that live  
In Great and Greater Britain.”  
*Harrow Song-Book* : E. W. HOWSON.

*Printed in Great Britain by  
Hasell, Watson & Viney, Ltd., London and Aylesbury.*

OUR thanks are due to the friends whose kind permission to use their letters has made it possible to put together this sketch of a life of many and varied activities.

MARGARET M. VERNEY.  
HERMIONE CUNNINGHAM.



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# SIR HENRY STEWART CUNNINGHAM, K.C.I.E.

## CHAPTER I

### HOME INFLUENCES AND SCHOOL

HENRY STEWART CUNNINGHAM was born at Harrow on June 30, 1832, in a home where the strictest principles of the Evangelical School, then a living force in the Church of England, were combined with a breadth of intellectual outlook which did not always go with them.

His father, the Rev. J. W. Cunningham, left Cambridge in 1802 as Sixth Wrangler and a Fellow of St. John's College; he took Orders immediately and served as Curate to the Rev. John Venn (the third in descent of a series of eminent divines), who carried on the "Evangelical Succession" as Rector of Clapham. Sir James Stephen, in his *Ecclesiastical Biography*, has given a graphic and on the whole a sympathetic account of the Clapham Sect and its influence on the public life of England: "Clapham Common thought itself the best of all possible commons," and gained many recruits among the young men from Harrow and Cambridge.

Thackeray, in *The Newcomes*, has pictured its less attractive side: the rich old ladies with their circle of flatterers, their hothouse grapes and their hot-house piety, their mutual admiration, their intolerance of any opinions that were not "of the Common." Into this society Mr. Venn's clever young curate would have been heartily received and initiated into its many activities.

While still a curate, Mr. Cunningham married, in 1805, Sophia, daughter of Robert Williams, of Moor Park, Surrey. They had a numerous family, and it must have been a welcome promotion when he was made Vicar of Harrow in 1811; he was settled there for the rest of his long life.<sup>1</sup> During the fifty years of his ministry he was not only a

<sup>1</sup> Children of Sophia (*née* Williams), Mr. Cunningham's first wife:

(1) Robert.

(2) Jane, born 1807; died Aug. 13, 1824.

(3) Harriet (Mrs. Foote), born Nov. 25, 1808; died April 12, 1839.

(4) Charles Thornton, born May 5, 1811, died Jan. 14, 1847.

(5) Olivia Fanny (Mrs. Woodward), born April 24, 1812 or 1813; died April 15, 1901.

(6) Mary Anne (Mrs. Williams), born Sept. 17, 1814; died Sept. 1, 1855.

(7) Francis Macaulay, born Oct. 11, 1815; died March 30, 1899.

(8) Louisa Byron, born Nov. 29, 1816; died Aug. 4, 1846.

(9) John William, born May 1, 1818; died April 6, 1901.

(10) Sophia, born Dec. 9, 1819; died Aug. 3, 1839.

Children of Mary (*née* Calvert), Mr. Cunningham's second wife:

(11) Caroline Emily, born Feb. 1828; died Dec. 23, 1828.

(12) Mary Richenda (Lady Stephen), born July 10, 1829; died Nov. 28, 1912.

(13) Henry Stewart, born June 30, 1832; died Sept. 3, 1920.

(14) Emily Caroline (Lady Egerton), born Oct. 19, 1833; died Dec. 12, 1916.

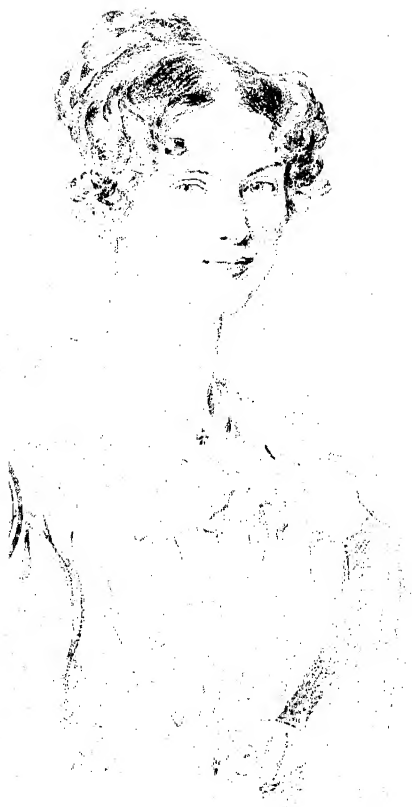
zealous parish priest, but a writer of repute and a leader in the cause of foreign and home missions. His *Velvet Cushion* became instantly popular, and went through ten editions in two years after its publication in 1814. It was an attempt from his own standpoint to illustrate the vicissitudes of the Church of England since the Reformation, with a slender thread of narrative in the adventures of the velvet cushion of a Church pulpit, and the discussions thereon by an old vicar and his adoring wife. There was a certain grace and charm in the telling of the story, and happy little character-sketches, such as that of the pious lady who "would start up furiously from the 14th chapter of St. John to thunder at a housemaid." The author's desire to be fair to other men's opinions did not, however, prevent his dealing hard blows at "Papists," Calvinists, Arminians, Antinomians, Independents, and the whole body of "Dissenters."

It seemed a small stone to stir the waters of controversy as deeply as it did, but a number of protests and refutations sprang up, all coming out under the shelter of the popular title, as *A New Covering to the Velvet Cushion* and so on, which served only to increase its circulation.

Mr. Cunningham became widely known as a champion of the Evangelical party. He had many friends in Parliament and in the Army and Navy who were zealous for religious and social reform, and he was intimate with the successive Head Masters of Harrow School, which formed part of his con-

gregation. In 1818 he was made a Governor of the School.

His wife died in 1821, and six years later he married Mary, eldest daughter of General Sir Harry Calvert. Although only twenty-seven at the time of her marriage, Mary Calvert had had a long training in home-making and in the management of children. She lost her own beautiful and accomplished mother when she was six years old, and, child as she was, she began to mother the four little ones, from her brother aged five to the baby a fortnight old. Her busy father, crushed by the sudden loss of the wife who had always been his beloved comrade and counsellor, learnt to depend more and more on his little daughter, who grew up to be a perfect hostess. It was a very full and interesting life that the girl led. The General, who had begun his military career amid the disasters of the war with America and the vacillations and reverses of our campaigns in Flanders, was deeply impressed with the need of professional training in the Army, and was starting the first Staff College for Officers, and the Duke of York's School for Soldiers' Orphans. He was also occupied with reforms in the Chaplain's Department and in the Military Hospitals. In his official capacity as Adjutant-General, and with the cordial support of the old King George III he thoroughly enjoyed his various beneficent activities. His children had the happiest recollections of their home at Little Camden House, set in the midst of green fields; of breakfast parties, with their own



MARY CALVERT (MRS. CUNNINGHAM).

*From a sketch by Sir Wm. Ross, 1826.*





milk and cream and eggs and home-made bread ; and of the General with his soldier-guests riding down to the War Office after breakfast. Meanwhile, the brothers had gone to their father's old school at Harrow, whence Harry went on to Sandhurst and was the first cadet admitted to the new Staff College ; and Frederick, the " baby " of Mary's early care (later a distinguished member of the Parliamentary Bar), was felt to have covered his family with glory by becoming Captain of the School Cricket XI. The Vicar of Harrow was thus naturally amongst their intimate friends. The General was in full sympathy with the opinions of *The Velvet Cushion*, and asked Mr. Cunningham to prepare his eldest daughter for Confirmation. Her sisters, Fanny and Emily, were growing up and taking their share in the home life, but it was to Mary that her father and her brothers always looked as the mistress and friend of the family and household.

In later years Sir Harry Calvert and his daughters gave their entertainments in the stately rooms of Chelsea Hospital, but whether there or in the more homely comfort of Little Camden House, the General's guests were all devoted to their beautiful young hostess, while, to his surprise and disappointment, his eldest daughter cared for none of them.

In July 1826 there was a happy wedding in the old Chelsea Church, when Fanny Calvert was married to Abel Smith, the rich and philanthropic banker, and became as years went on the mother

of a large family. Three months later, while the bride and bridegroom were still away on their honeymoon, Sir Harry Calvert died suddenly at Claydon House (September 3, 1826) on a visit to old Mrs. Verney, who had made him her heir. She survived her cousin only a few months, when the General's eldest son—Harry—succeeded to Claydon in 1827 and took the name of Verney; his youngest sister—Emily—kept house for him until her marriage with the Rev. W. R. Fremantle, late Rector of Claydon and Dean of Ripon.

Mary Calvert's home was thus broken up, and a few months after her father's death she married the widower Vicar of Harrow, who had been her most intimate friend for some time past. She came into a house full of sons and daughters, the elder of whom were about her own age. Her relations with them were of the happiest; and when two little girls and a boy of her own were added to the large family party, her stepchildren gave them a kindly welcome.

Mrs. Cunningham destined her own little boy for the Church, and wished him to be christened Henry, rather than Harry, as a more dignified name for a clergyman. She always gave him his religious instruction herself, and he was sent young to the famous Evangelical School kept by Mr. Renaud at Bayford, Herts., where some of his cousins were also educated; and at thirteen he entered the Head Master's House at Harrow (July 1845). During the holidays he used to have a class of the

Vicar's choirboys, and kept them very merry; he recollected on one occasion when he was reading out to them, that they laughed so uproariously that his father came to see what the matter was.

Mrs. Cunningham's death in 1849 was the first great sorrow of Henry's life. He was then seventeen and at an age to miss extremely all her love and sympathy. The Head Master's letter to his father shows the admiration and respect that Mrs. Cunningham had inspired at Harrow, and the influences which still surrounded her son.

*From Dr. Vaughan to the Rev. J. W. Cunningham*

"HARROW.

"February 12, 1849.

"... You know how I admire, how I could not but reverence the pure and loving spirit that you have lost. . . . Never did I hear from her lips one word that could jar with the thought of her as now made perfect. . . . How easy a transition it seems from such a life to that which is now for ever hers! To poor, poor Henry I would beg my affectionate remembrances. He has loved his mother in life and will love to think that he can now prove it in that way which would give her the keenest pleasure by tenfold love and obedience to his father's wishes for him. . . ."

How fully those wishes were fulfilled was shown by his dutiful attention to his father during the remaining twelve years of the Vicar's life.

In March 1851 the Vicar was being congratulated

on his son's "high achievement" in gaining the Peel Medal.

In the June following Henry was admitted to Trinity College, Oxford, under President J. Wilson, D.D., "sub tutamine magistrorum Short, Haddan, Wayte [who succeeded Wilson as President in 1866] et Petch."

How the intervening months were spent till he went up in October, Henry relates to his lifelong friend Henry Montagu Butler, then Head of Harrow School, with one of Henry's Claydon cousins as his fag.

"NORWICH.

"September 8, 1851.

"MY DEAR BUTLER,—

"Many thanks for your highly satisfactory letter, which was a great solace to me under the trying circumstances of a private tutor, hard living and harder work, which are my lot at present.

"I came here on Monday, and a pretty hole I seem to have got into; a garret with sloping walls, airy and healthy for the winter months, a picturesque but very inconvenient chest of drawers, a rickety chair and a table to match, present, as you may imagine, a somewhat dismal contrast to my Harrow abode. Having no bell to one's room also gives scope for a good deal of amusement in the shape of running up and down stairs for what you want, which on the whole, however, does not suit my disposition as well as calling 'boy.' It, however, answers its purpose in making me swot, to a degree which you would not believe if I were to tell you, and which I never supposed possible. Whether

my health will bear up under such an accumulation remains to be proved; it has fortunately been fortified by a most charming month in Switzerland with the Governor, 2 sisters, and 1 brother, and friends. . . . At Geneva we met Hilbert, who is travelling solo, and talked as only Harrovians can talk when they meet for an hour or two in the evening.

" . . . I have been rather in a fuss lately about a profession and am afraid I shall go to pot if I don't look out. How very refreshing it is to talk a little slang again! I am much afraid I shall not be able to get to Harrow at the time you propose. . . . And now with regard to Lord's, you will see I have taken a new pen to offer my congratulations. I saw the account of the matches at Berne, about a fortnight afterwards, and went pretty nearly wild with 'conflicting emotions'! . . . I should like to have seen your innings and clapped with the cads—Zooks! couldn't I have yelled to see the 3'ers and 4'ers go spinning about the ground and frantic Etonians rushing and panting in vain, with old Chadd composedly resting at one end of the Pavilion and Billy Warner divinely drunk in the Public in honour of his 'dear children,' etc., etc. But I am getting quite excited and so must pull up short and wish you good-bye."

This cricket match was remembered in after-years as the only one in which the future Head Master played for Harrow at Lord's! It was played on August 1 and 2, 1851. Harrow won by eight wickets; their captain was E. C. Leigh, afterwards the Hon. Sir E. Chandos Leigh, K.C.B.

In Howson & Warner's *Harrow School* a curious incident of the match is recorded. When Montagu Butler—

“ had scored about 20 runs, he received a violent blow on the knee, on account of which play was stopped for some minutes. The opposing side crowded round him, expressing their sorrow and suggesting various remedies. When play was resumed, and he had got to the end of the bowler (Reay) who had caused the mishap, the umpire said to him, ‘ It’s lucky for you, sir, that you was ’it so ’ard, as the bowler forgot to ask for leg before, and you was clean out ! ’ ”

## CHAPTER II

### UNDERGRADUATE DAYS

THE change from the home at Harrow to Trinity College, Oxford, must have been a great one to a mind so open to new impressions.

In his Life of Lord Bowen, who came up to Oxford soon after he did, Sir Henry has left us a vivid picture of the "exciting atmosphere" of the University during their undergraduate days: "The great theological movement which had stirred the preceding generation had sunk into comparative quiescence." The Oxford of Stanley and Jowett was full of schemes of University reform, and for a larger measure of Liberal learning and of theological freedom than was then encouraged in what John Bright called "the home of dead languages and undying prejudices."

Henry Cunningham was soon in the inner circle of the ardent spirits who were putting life into the dead bones.

In his obituary letter to *The Times*, on his friend's death, Mr. Frederic Harrison recalls these days:

"As one of the few survivors of the Oxford group, of which Henry Cunningham was a leading

member, I would bear my witness to his brilliant wit, stout spirit, and affectionate nature. He was one of the early members of the 'Essay Society' founded about 1853 by Lord Goschen, Charles Roundell, George Brodrick, John Bridges, Godfrey Lushington, Charles Bowen, Kenelm Digby. We all loved Henry Cunningham, who took an active part in our discussions on all things under heaven, and was the life of our annual gathering, at the dinner which 'satellites of the gate' were sometimes invited to share. It is a delightful memory to have known Henry Cunningham, as an undergraduate of Trinity, where I had school friends, and was intimate with Harrow men with whom Cunningham had even a closer family connection. He was my junior by one year; we were called to the Bar in successive years; and then we lived in close friendship until after seven years of legal and literary work in London he entered on his main career as official and Judge in India."

Besides these mutual friends mentioned by Mr. Harrison, Henry Cunningham was intimate with Alfred Blomfield, son of the Bishop of London, and later himself a bishop, who had come on to Balliol from Harrow, and whom he described as "endowed with a hereditary aptitude for classical niceties and a dry and caustic wit"; J. G. Cordery, "a graceful and accomplished scholar," as shown later in his fine translation of Homer; with Hemming Robeson, a scholar of Balliol; R. E. Bartlett; Horace Davey; W. H. Fremantle; Charles Pearson; A. G. Butler; J. D. Sandford (Judicial Commissioner in Burma and Chief Justice of Mysore); A. S. Howell



(Magistrate in the Central Provinces); J. W. S. Wylie (Under-Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs to the Government of India); and G. F. Eliot, the late Dean of Windsor. Most of these were Trinity men. R. E. Bartlett was a well-known figure at Oxford, a Scholar and Fellow of Trinity; he gave some interesting Bampton Lectures in 1888 on "The Letter and the Spirit"; he was Perpetual Curate of St. Mark's, Whitechapel, Vicar of Pershore, and lastly (on the gift of the College) Vicar of Great Waltham.

Another name that constantly occurs in their letters is that of A. W. Haddan, for twenty years a Fellow and Tutor of Trinity, who accepted a college living when this group of friends went down, and was joint editor with Bishop Stubbs of a book of immense learning on Councils and ecclesiastical documents.

Henry Cunningham was always welcomed at Fulham by his lively friend Alfred Blomfield and his sister. "Come to-morrow by all means," the former writes. "I am afraid we cannot promise you the same agricultural joys which you are leaving—our cockroaches are rather wild this year, otherwise we might have some fine sport in the kitchen."

Besides the diversions of the term, there were never-to-be-forgotten reading parties in the long vacations, in the Hartz Mountains and at Heidelberg, with Charles Bowen and others; in Westmorland; at Beddgelert; and at Aberfeldy with J. G. Cordery, who recalled its charms in the sweltering heat of Calcutta, where he went as one of the first

of the "Competition Wallahs," and where he and Henry met again.

The most memorable of these vacation trips was also the last. Early in August 1856 Henry Cunningham joined Montagu Butler for a month in the Alps. We are allowed to quote from the letters which Butler wrote to his mother.

From Geneva the friends went by steamer to Villeneuve (Butler finishing *Evelina* by the way), then on to Chamounix chiefly on foot, and coming in for a magnificent thunderstorm on the Col de Balme which made—

"a splendid funeral march as the sun was dying, . . . a few massy drops of rain which instantly changed to hail, a terrified waving in the grass blades, then amid fresh salvos of thunder, the storm-wind dashed up the vale. We had to rush into the chalet, the window was loaded with hail beating against it with the fury of an assaulting army. The gleam on the Mer de Glace became extinguished, the sky was riven and torn in wild slits by the forked lightning. It was impossible not to feel instinctively reminded of Elijah standing with folded mantle at the door of the cave on Horeb, while amid the fire and the earthquake 'onward came the Lord.'

"The fury of the storm did not last an hour, but the wind howled afterwards though deserted by its allies. During the storm the bells of the little village churches were tolled, urging the people to pray in their houses."

The next day they met with a Mr. Phelps, an Indian chaplain, "son of the proprietor of the Park

at Harrow," who obligingly carried their knapsacks on to Chamounix on his mules.

They were rather the worse for their energy in the hot sun and "the miscellaneous drinks" they thirstily swallowed; but Butler assures his mother, lest she should be anxious about him—

"that Mr. Simon of the Board of Health is here, and told me yesterday—à propos of the projected Jardin expedition—that he would mend anything I broke but my neck. He is exploring about with Ruskin, who has been here a month, and is a first-rate French scholar and most rapid mountain-climber. I have not yet seen him to speak to, but I saw him chatting away in a shop in very good French, apparently a great favourite."

They are disappointed not to get a mail at Chamounix, and Butler sums up his friend's woes:

"No letter—sore feet—  
A dry loaf—and a damp sheet."

They got down to Aosta, and passing through a country of chestnuts and vines enlivened with lizards, grasshoppers, and butterflies, they returned to the snows of the Col de Théodule, and came down upon Zermatt, looking up at the yet unconquered slopes of the Matterhorn. Hearing that a party was being formed for the ascent of Monte Rosa, the friends were suddenly drawn into the vortex of mountaineering, and started with a party to sleep at the Riffel Alp. "One Simond was elected as Chef des Guides . . . a splendid fellow from Cha-

mounix, a large-made man, active as a chamois, with a big brawny wrist, a calm low voice, and a quiet, humorous smile." Mr. Carson, from Trinity College, Dublin, took the lead, an experienced mountaineer, bringing with him a brother-clergyman whose very stout figure was felt to doom him to failure. They went to sleep in the little wooden house to the sound "of a strange, wild hum of tramping feet, voices of maid-servants cooking, anxious enquiries about to-morrow's weather," and much greasing of boots and feet. They were roused at 2.30 a.m.; Mr. Carson proposed that they should have prayers—"we all knelt down while he offered up some of the most beautiful and familiar of the Church collects."

"We started twenty-four in all, the moon and stars shining clearly and showing the path." The snow was hard and in good condition, and they went steadily up a great glacier, the stout clergyman whispering that it was tough work. About five, rosy blushes of dawn appeared; "soon after, gentlemen were seen taking the hands of guides, porters lay on their backs and lagged behind, and there were frequent halts to the disgust of the lustier spirits." At 10.30 they reached the bottom of the Col where the really steep climbing began, and each man had to put his feet in the steps cut by the foremost guide.

"Presently the alpenstocks have to be laid aside and you cling to the rocks with both hands benumbed with snow. One of the party having passed a

critical bit, goes too fast, tightening the rope behind him; a cry of 'Doucement' greets him from the tied and the guides. Or the rope suddenly tightens, someone has slipped and shouts of 'Tenez—Attendez—Arrêtez!' burst from the guides succeeded by 'Avancez—Allez—Vorwärts!' . . . Near the summit was a queerish parapet quite perpendicular of about 10 feet. Simond counselled that we should be untied; one of the Zermatt guides looked up angrily, 'Qui commande?' 'Moi je le veux,' was the calm, steady reply. The Duke could not have uttered it more firmly. Simond stood on the top of the parapet, you held up your arm, it was grasped, you were landed on the top, only a few minutes' climb from the actual summit. . . . A sea of billowy clouds floated thousands of feet below us over what we knew to be Maggiore, . . . in harmony with the present aspect of Italy, promising brilliance, but obscured by clouds of uncertainty. . . . Mr. Carson arrived after some time, very weak, propped up by two guides. We gave him three cheers."

The rest of the party descended to the Riffel and slept there, but Cunningham and Butler tramped on to Zermatt, "thus beginning and ending the day with stars, having been on foot for nearly eighteen hours." Other climbs were attempted, but the ascent of Monte Rosa stood out in their memories. Fate carried off Henry Cunningham to far-distant climes, but Montagu Butler remained faithful to Zermatt, and some twenty-five years later he was arriving there with a troop of little ones of his own, all eager to hear of and emulate the mountain adventures of his undergraduate days.

After their rough time in the mountains they thoroughly enjoyed the summer beauty of the Lago Maggiore. At the close of a luxurious day of boating and bathing they sallied out of their hotel at Baveno "to see the stars above the lake." Butler describes a scene "which England could not have furnished":

"Within a few yards of our hotel were two or three groups of people, chiefly but not entirely young girls, engaged in plucking hemp, by the light of a brilliant fire replenished every few minutes with fresh refuse from the hemp. This threw a wild glare on the faces of the workers such as painters, like Rembrandt, Teniers, Murillo, for example, have loved to imitate. The most lively and laughing chat went on all the time, not unhallowed by a certain mixture of graceful flirtation. Presently the largest group began, as they sat, to sing in wild harmony, not it is true with very soft or mellow voices, but with great energy and much humour. The most skittish little boys discharged the duty of keeping up the fire, and relieved the tediousness of official routine by somersaults by the blazing embers, or races through the flames. The lurid light, the wild yet harmonious sounds, the gaiety and the exquisitely graceful motions of the girls as they worked or talked—all this on a beautiful starlight night under the glittering leaves of trees and within a few paces of the silent lake, made for us a delightfully foreign picture—and not the less so because it was all carried on at the very door of what in London would have been a gin-shop, and conducted apparently with perfect order and propriety. After

attempting to rival the singers with some native catches, in which Mr. Hoare's beautiful tenor leads the way, we went to bed."

Entering Milan a few days later they found it "a conquered city," and were continually harassed by having to report themselves to the police. Outside Milan they found an Austrian camp of some 3,000 men, perfectly equipped with infantry and artillery, and "a great frowning fortress, with high thick walls, loopholed both for cannon and musketry." Within the city the Italians kept to certain quarters and never mixed with the Austrians, who had the principal street and its cafés entirely to themselves, with none but Germans and other foreigners to speak to.

"Some great wrongs," Butler wrote, "must be accepted as facts. I fear the destruction of Poland is one of these; but the subjugation of Lombardy by Austria, a people utterly alien and distasteful to them in language and manners, seems to me one of those things which cannot last. Victor Emmanuel and Count Cavour are the heroes of Milan."

Garibaldi was out of the picture for the moment in that summer of 1856, building himself a house at Caprera; but Henry saw him later on riding at the head of his troops, at the time of his conquest of Naples.

The beauty of the Cathedral and a visit to Leonardo's "Last Supper" remained as their brightest recollections of unhappy Milan. Austrian

dragoons were drilling outside as they entered the convent to see the glorious fresco, the prints of which had been to both of them "household friends from childhood." Butler's first impression was of dismay at the ravages of damp—

"testifying to the mortality of colour and the neglect of men. But the old faces were there; the one of Christ in particular more sweet by far, and grave and majestically sorrowful, than anything I had dreamt of from the engravings. Matthew, the fourth figure on the right, is supposed to be corroborating the words of our Lord, possibly from the insight into Judas's character which his knowledge of money matters might be conceived as conveying."

They left Milan burning with indignation at the foreign military occupation, extending even to "the latitudinarian sun" which could smile down equally on Austrian insolence and Italian martyrdom.

The friends parted at Lucerne, Butler going on to study at Dresden, but feeling his later letters too stupid to be worth their postage. "I have not yet recovered the loss of Cunningham; the last has been a most happy month and seems as long as three."

Henry Cunningham took a second class in Honour Classical Moderations in 1853, and a second class in the Final Honours School of Classics, Lit. Hum., in 1856, and then began reading Law.

Through all the vicissitudes and changes of abode in his eventful life, Sir Henry kept the letters of his early college friends, recalling vividly the rush of young life in work and play. Two only may find



room here—a frantic appeal from Bartlett for a book lent and lost, and Blomfield's lively account of his friend's popularity in Oxford society.

“MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—

“I write to you in mingled grief, despair, and rage—I went to your lodgings and found my Translation of the Republic, but my Twiss's Livy was nowhere visible. That precious volume contains in marginal quotations, scratches of red ink, and connotative pencil-marks, well nigh all my knowledge of the first Decade of Titus the Patavian. Miscreant! where is it? If it were lost, then the results of many weeks of painful toil have perished. I feel I have said enough to harrow up your soul. . . . Write and tell me about my Livy, for I am in a frightful rage. Salute any of my Harrow friends, and remember me very kindly to your people.

“Yours ever,

“R. E. BARTLETT.”

Blomfield writes :

“I am going to-day to Oxford, where I shall distribute among friends those remembrances which you would no doubt have given to my charge had you had the opportunity. How society will stagnate in your absence! A dinner or breakfast party will become a leaden and lifeless absurdity. Food will be eaten, drinks absorbed, and the weather discussed, but where will be that playful fancy, which like the bee culled sweets alike from the rank weed and the fragrant flower; and like the sun gilded everything which it touched—once the property of a Cunningham.”

His University career ended brilliantly by Henry Cunningham gaining the Chancellor's Prize for the English Essay in 1857.

This success, with the sympathy which it evoked from his Oxford friends, was an important event in his life. It distinctly proved his literary ability and his power of grappling with an abstruse subject ; it gave him confidence in himself and hope for his future career. He had spared no pains to deserve success.

The subject set was considered a difficult one : " A Comparison of the Moral Results of the Grecian and Egyptian Mythologies." He consulted several older men as to the books he ought to read, amongst others, Charles Kingsley, perhaps on account of the learning he had shown in *Hypatia*, published a few years previously. Kingsley wrote a full and kind reply :

" EVERSLEY.

" January 26, 1857.

" MY DEAR SIR,—

" . . . There is an account of the ancient Theologies in the Oxford Essays by my friend Max Müller, which is very admirable ; of German books, I am ashamed to say, I know so little that I can be of no use to you.

" The distinctive character of the Greek Gods, I mean the Gods of the Danaoi and other Homeric Tribes, as distinguished from the elder Nature-Gods whose worship lingered, especially in Arcadia, seems to be their human character. They are the Archetypes and friends and inspirers of men. Where they

are the enemies of men, it is under the influence of *human* passions. This gives (to me) their great value (which I have tried to bring out in a little book called *The Heroes*) as distinguished from the mere nature gods of Egypt, the only anthropomorphic impersonation of whom seems to have been the Pharaoh or Sun-King himself—as complete a Man-God as the Inca of the Peruvians ; and more so than that awful portent of later times, the Dives Cæsar, or his successor The Pope. But I daresay that about all this you know more than I do.”

Professor Max Müller also wrote a careful answer to his queries, advising that the Egyptian Mythology should be studied for the purposes of the Essay from Greek sources, in Herodotus, Plato, and Augustine’s *De Civitate Dei* ; and giving some German authorities. He considered the subject set as so difficult that he hardly liked to give advice.

When the Vice-Chancellor announced to the President that the coveted distinction had fallen to Trinity College, there was a general burst of congratulation, but none could have been more welcome than the hastily penned note of Henry Montagu Butler :

“ DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—

“ Old Jackson and I have exchanged congratulations over the good news of your essay. I am delighted—whatever be the subject and however you have treated it.”

His older friends paid him the compliment of not taking the Essay “ merely as a nice pamphlet with

the University arms outside," but as wishing to discuss with him "the thoughts it enshrined."

Professor Max Müller was very appreciative :

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"I have to thank you for sending me a copy of your Prize Essay. I have read it with great interest, and I think it fully deserved the success and distinction which it has gained. It is a vast subject, and if treated in the spirit in which you have treated it, it will repay not only the researches of the scholar and the antiquarian, but the thoughts and meditations of the historian and philosopher. I hope you will go on with it, and if you should be at Oxford after the Long Vacation, it would be a great pleasure to me to see you and to discuss some of the questions in which we both take an interest."

Many of Henry's contemporaries had taken Orders, and affectionate appreciations reached him from country curacies, where men, cut off from much intellectual companionship, keenly relished his success and recalled their common memories.

Hemming Robeson (afterwards Archdeacon and Canon of Bristol), who had himself won the Chancellor's Prize for a Latin Essay the year before, wrote from his first curacy at Bray, near Maidenhead, urging his friend to visit him :

"We might at least talk over old times in a punt on the river, thus fancying ourselves again at Alma Mater and lounging on the Cherwell."

Lionel Damer writes from Flixborough Rectory, in Lincolnshire :

*" June 29, 1857.*

" In this out-of-the-way part of the world it took me till yesterday to find out that you had got the English Essay prize. I congratulate you very much. The same paper told me of a whole cluster of my friends having distinguished themselves, and first our dear Haddan, who has worked like a slave to write a biography of some obscure little theologian, whom no one cares about. Then Bartlett, Bowen, Curteis, all seem to have got something. The busy world rolls on, and I watch it flow by from a little nook here, where I am reading for the September ordination at Lincoln."

George Brodrick, later Warden of Merton, wrote :

" . . . I always hoped you would get it [the English Essay]. I assure you that it hardly gave me greater pleasure when I got it myself. It raises you at once (not in the eyes of your friends, but ostensibly) from a 2nd to a 1st Class man, plus the éclat of a unique distinction. I trust sincerely that it will encourage you (an encouragement we all need) to believe that you have something in you which will tell in the long run.

" Do not forget in your legitimate excitement the great interests of the Society's dinner. Fremantle and Davey will both come, Perceval cannot. Beat up recruits, make each believe it depends on him, speak of the enthusiasm of the London members, and use all the expedients known to Napoleon and Barnum for raising the wind. . . . Pray deliver your Essay with effect."

Frederic Harrison reminds him that "Dizzy" has called this prize "the Blue Riband of the University."

Henry's former schoolmaster—Mr. Renaud—felt that he would have been sorry to grapple himself with so hard a subject and hoped that his future career might be "more than brilliant—useful and godly; I need not then add happy."

In a lighter vein, his friend Blomfield rejoices—

"in the anticipation of your flowing periods! Something of the genuine old Johnsonian antithesis and majestic array of words will still have a place in classical English literature in your Essay. As for the important part—the thoughts—I hope only one thing—that you will be sufficiently shallow. The subject, if I remember right, is something about mythologies, and there must be a sad temptation there to be very deep and wise, and which I hope you have done your best to resist.

"This has quite decided me on running up to Oxford to hear you and Bowen. . . . I am sure I shall laugh when I see you in the Rostrum."

The only corrective to this torrent of praise was supplied by Fitzjames Stephen, who criticised both the matter and the manner of the Essay in the true *Saturday Review* style, of which he was a master—but he thought it "a vile subject," considered that his young brother-in-law had "a considerable literary gift," and begged to be excused the "impudence of my compliments."

To so affectionate a nature as Henry Cunningham's,

his best reward was the thought of the joy it would cause at home.

“How it would have pleased your mother!” was his Uncle Verney’s comment on the news. His sister Emily is beside herself with delight :

“I hope you will sleep all the better for the good news of to-day. I feel as if I should be awake all night thinking of it, and enjoying it.”

The Vicar expressed his “joyous gratitude” for his son’s “triumph,” and concluded with : “May all great honours be laid at the feet of the only Master worth serving.”

## CHAPTER III

### CALLED TO THE BAR

ON June 10, 1859, Henry Cunningham was called to the Bar, Inner Temple. No doubt he shared the feelings he attributed to his friend Charles Bowen : " The first plunge of the Oxford scholar into his new profession was not encountered without some natural shudders of dislike. The contrast between London life and the familiar pursuits and pleasant intercourse of the University was no doubt more striking than agreeable." But in his own case " the dreary days " were lightened by the best of companionship. During Henry's time at Oxford his eldest sister Mary had married an extremely able man, James Fitzjames Stephen, who without interest or influential connections was slowly making his way as a barrister by the force of industry and talent.

Henry Cunningham shared his brother-in-law's chambers, and was encouraged by him to use " his distinct gift and taste for literature " to add to his income. He wrote for the *Saturday Review* and *The Times*, and was a contributor to the *Cornhill* during Thackeray's editorship. During the remaining two years of his father's life he used to spend his



week-ends at Harrow, where his sister Emily was keeping house at Julian Hill.

A letter from her testifies to her disappointment when his coming was prevented :

“ MY DEAREST HENRY,—

“ It seems sad to have to write to you instead of hoping to see you. However, I am glad to think you are taking a holiday. . . . I really do not know what we should do, if we lived at a distance from London, where you could not come to us constantly. It makes the whole difference in the comfort and happiness of my life and the dear Vicar's too. . . . I hope you will get away into some wild and desert place where you will see no human beings, at least no disagreeable ones, . . . but where you can lie on your back in the sunshine and the long ferns, and dream your novel to your heart's content. Fitzjames has had some briefs and is in very good spirits with his circuit, Mary says. Send me some more of your novel if you want any copied. . . . Ever, dearest H.,

“ Yr. most loving

“ E. C. C.”

His Oxford friends keep him informed of the college gossip, and are always urging him to return for any union debate or club dinner.

“ I am glad you are taking so kindly to the law,” Bartlett writes. “ It is indeed a noble pursuit, and brings you into contact with various phases of human life engendering that noble superiority to Truth and Justice so indispensable to the man who

would succeed in the world. Trinity is well. The great news is that Petch is going to be married. . . . Haddan is much as usual: still the same gentle winning creature, diffusing happiness wherever he goes."

Blomfield about 1856 writes of public affairs:

"These are times, Sir, in which we stand—to use a bold mixture of metaphors—on the eve of a precipice. Every throne in Europe is tottering to its fall—the spire of St. Mary's ditto, ditto—the Government is breaking up with nothing to supply its place—the Church is cracking (if I may so speak of such a venerable institution) in a thousand places—and where is the plasterer that can warrant its lasting ten years more? Let us hope that we undismayed shall o'er the ruins smile and light our respective torches at the funeral pile of Church and State, Monarchy and Constitution. You will be glad to hear that the College Torpid, hitherto bottom of the river, has made a bump; from the row made in quad on the occasion, you would have supposed that young Payne had got through the schools, or Haddan had broken his neck."

The same friend writes in February 1858:

"MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—

"The College desires me to say that it will be delighted to welcome you to its arms on Saturday; indeed we have gone so far as to rusticate a man simply in order that you may have his rooms. You will be astonished to find the College all ablaze with gas. . . . About this time Haddan and Meyrick are to be seen returning from Buckingham Palace

in tights, black silk stockings, and buckles. I should think the Queen will be greatly gratified by Haddan's presence; he has never honoured her before."

A few days later Bartlett writes :

" I am deputed by all your friends in Oxford to write and tell you how very much we enjoyed your only too short visit. Bowen especially, who took so much trouble to invite your friends to meet you at dinner, was delighted to find you so little altered. . . . Did the Theological atmosphere from which you expected so much agree with you ? "

Alfred Blomfield had settled down at Kidderminster under the Rev. Thomas Claughton (afterwards Bishop of Rochester), who had as great a reputation for the training of young clergymen as Dr. Vaughan had at Beverley. He writes (in 1857) :

" I am now one of that underpaid, overworked and much maligned body—the English Curates. Lawyers and clergymen are sometimes classed together as ' the learned professions '—but I think they have really less in common than any two professions. It is true both are founded on the vices and weaknesses of mankind—for I suppose in a perfect state of Society clergymen would be as useless as lawyers. But then while *you* live by those vices, *we* live *for* their mitigation or suppression. *We* try to turn evil into good, *your* highest ambition is only ' to make the worse appear the better cause '—and while *you* gain your object, such as it is, by the acuteness of the *head*, *we* can

do nothing but by affecting the *heart*. Therefore to a lawyer nothing clerical can be interesting—and we are very clerical here.

“I must say for us that there is no humbug about us. We don’t pretend to be intellectual, liberal in our religious views, interested in the great political questions of the day, well informed in matters of science, or anything of the sort or kind—we are simply a set of very ordinary but well-meaning persons (there are eight or nine of us altogether), trying to help out of all sorts of bad ways and misery a set of very ignorant lower-middle and lower-class people, as well as we can by our lights and means. And in dealing with these said poor people I begin at last to feel that I have found my level. I have suffered all my life, or at least in parts of it, from being shoved up into a higher intellectual atmosphere than was natural to me—but really with these Kidderminster weavers and people I feel in point of education, etc., quite on a level with them, which is a great comfort.” (This from a man who had just taken a First in Greats!) . . . “I will only remind you that all views or statements of mine are made with the saving clause (which is every Englishman’s right) of being allowed to contradict myself whenever I please. . . .

“Ever yours affately,

“ALFRED BLOMFIELD.”

Later he hears from W. D. Parish that—

“Haddan is to give up his office as Vice-President and is entertaining his undergraduate connection with a farewell dinner. . . . Owing to Petch’s departure our freshmen were ploughed to a (fresh)

man for Smalls, and there seems every chance of the candidates for Greats affording the examiners an equally available field for their agricultural pursuits. There is no one now to point out men's weak points as Petch, that *unci (que) puer monstrator aratri*, used to do."

Cordery is missed from the Oxford gatherings—he writes graphic letters from Calcutta—but Blomfield fears that "if we ever see him again, he will probably be as yellow as the guineas he has been accumulating."

Henry had thus a busy life between London, Oxford, and Harrow.

## CHAPTER IV

### THE MAKING OF ITALY

THE pleasant fashion of an earlier day, of making a Grand Tour before settling down to the work of life, had become too costly and leisurely for the young men of Henry Cunningham's generation. But when few newspapers had regular foreign correspondents, it was possible for a young man who could write to go to some scene of action and lessen his expenses by contributing to a journal of repute. In the summer of 1860 the eyes of England were following with sympathy the heroic struggle for Italian freedom.

The Vicar of Harrow had influential friends, who could give his son excellent introductions. His uncle Sir Harry Verney had been in Naples some years previously, visiting the prisons that Mr. Gladstone made so notorious, and had kept up with his Italian friends.

Mr. George M. Trevelyan, in his fascinating volume on *Garibaldi and the Making of Italy*, lays it down that "1860 was the decisive year in that long process, the year when Italy was made." It was the young barrister's good fortune to be at Naples

in that epoch-making year; and some letters to his father and some articles sent to the press have been preserved.

Events had moved rapidly since he and Montagu Butler had found Milan, in 1856, ground down by Austrian occupation, when even Da Vinci's "Last Supper" could not be contemplated without the rattle of arms in the courtyard of the convent.

By the end of May 1860, Palermo had surrendered to Garibaldi. The young King of Naples, Francis II, published in June a Liberal Constitution, but it came too late. In July Garibaldi gained a decisive victory at Milazzo in North Sicily, crossed the Straits and made his way through Calabria; the King and Queen retired to Gaeta; and September 7 Garibaldi entered Naples, acclaimed by the people as their Dictator and Deliverer. But the victory was not yet secure; a large Bourbon Army still held Gaeta and the line of the Volturno. In this crisis Cavour sent the Royal army from Piedmont to attack Ancona, and to join hands with Garibaldi, and it was on the very day of the surrender of Ancona that Henry wrote to his father from Naples, September 29, 1860:

"News here is wonderfully behind-hand, and you probably know more about the campaign than most of the people here. . . . The effect of this place is absolutely overpowering. The streets thronged all day long with the most picturesque crowd, every other man in some sort of uniform or wearing some kind of weapon: National Guards

in grey and red—Garibaldians proper in red flannel shirts—Calabrians with tall peaked hats and the most ferocious bayonets—Riflemen in green and black—sailors Neapolitan, French, Austrian, English, Russian—then peasants, every one of which would make a picture; great piles of figs, grapes, lemons, and peaches to be had for the asking—oxen lumbering with uncouth waggons—flocks of goats and turkeys driven in from the country—beggars, to whom the best got up London professional is a perfect Dives of luxurious competence—friars and monks of every possible shade—fishermen, sleeping on their own stalls, much in the condition of our first parents—all this under the softest of summer skies, a bay full of quaint fishing-boats and majestic men-of-war—Vesuvius streaming up a long wreath of smoke into the clear air, and the broken outline of distant hills and islands filling up all the horizon—the scene at which I have been staring in amazement for the last two days!

“Excitement seems at the boiling-point, the cafés are thronged with warriors and news-seekers of every description. . . . One can quite understand the difficulty of governing such a population of bright, excitable, sensitive children. The great mass of the people seem to be at play and trouble their heads very little about forms of government. You see beggar boys frolicking like kittens, crowds of people at the public lotteries in every street—soldiers at the highest romps, many of them country boys to whom the possession of a bright bayonet and badge is quite reason enough for espousing a new cause. . . . The houses are decorated with flags and pictures of Garibaldi, Victor Emmanuel, and Cavour, also with some extremely unromantic



allegories—e.g. Italy coming out of the sepulchre, Garibaldi offering her his arm, and Cavour making her the most conventional of bows, etc. I hear that the young King said to an officer of the Court, ‘I have received the education of a monk, not of a prince’; both he and his father seem to have set the whole population against them, King Ferdinand especially, by the disfavour shown to any judge who administered the law with leniency. . . . At the corners of the streets little boys, with the evident consciousness that they are about some awfully contra-band proceedings, offer you a *Sacra Biblia*, the gift, I suppose, of some too ardent Protestant.”

“*October 4, 1860.*— . . . The last few days have been very trying for the Garibaldians, the King’s troops trying to force their way through and make a dash for Naples, but the result has been success and encouragement: 2,200 prisoners have been brought in; you meet them frequently in the streets escorted by the National Guard. The capture of a number of officers is a still more important point. . . . The impudence of Ultramontane apologists for Neapolitan misrule becomes evident as soon as you go about here; town and country have suffered alike from the corruption and permitted oppression of the Crown appointees, and the absolutist theories which have been trained into a kind of stupid malevolence in this last most miserable specimen of Bourbonism. The nation has been sedulously governed down to a certain point of immorality—and the trade of the informer is a first-rate training for that of the assassin. But there is so much good raw material; the Calabrese are perfect pictures of the ideal peasant, and as they

march through the streets singing some Liberal song, it is enough to make one curse the fool of a king who could alienate such good subjects. They are now, I believe, fairly roused out of the sort of lazy frivolity which despair of improvement had made general. The people subscribe heartily—the National Guards are plentiful and have to work hard—and the women are active in the hospitals. Padre Gavazzi collected 1,100 pocket-handkerchiefs after one of his orations, for bandages for the wounded. The principal dancer at the Opera has two wounded men in her house, whom she takes the greatest care of. Here and there a priest or a friar has on a Liberal badge, and I saw a jolly fellow going up to Sta. Maria, astride of a waggon full of war materials—quite prepared to play the Church Militant on the right side of the quarrel."

Henry Cunningham paid more than one visit to Garibaldi's head-quarters at Caserta. The scene of a desperate attack by some 20,000 men on October 1, it had been held with desperate gallantry and the road to Naples defended. It was at Caserta that he saw for himself "the profound and intense sentiment of those engaged in the liberation of Italy in its most real, healthy and unmistakable form." He was struck afresh by the passionate devotion which Garibaldi inspired, guarded (in the popular belief) by the Angel Gabriel for the achievement of a grand patriotic design. He was much impressed with the energy and skill of Father Gavazzi; he had created quite a model hospital by the side of the Palace—

“ the disorder which reigns everywhere else completely vanishes here. The wards are lofty, beautifully white, and spacious ; Dominican friars are hurrying from bed to bed as the poor fellows come creeping in. In the midst of it all a distinguished Neapolitan lady, equipped as a vivandière and armed with a formidable sword, goes clanking up the steps to take her share in watching and nursing. Towards the close of the day one of the strange incidents of this irregular warfare gave for a moment the impression that Caserta had fallen into the enemy’s hands. A quantity of wounded soldiers and several visitors were waiting to return by one of the empty trains that had all day long been bringing up reserves from Naples to the camp. Suddenly a rush was observed from one corner of the Great Square, a body of troops just drawn up in front of the Palace were scampering to the right and left, the sharp crack of musketry rang out, and the alarm became a perfect panic. Carriages dashed out of the square in as hard a gallop as the remorselessness of terror could get out of a Neapolitan cab-horse. Groups of soldiers without commanders swelled the ranks of the fugitives. The train was quickly crowded, and it was not for want of entreaties to the Virgin Mary that it did not set off sixty miles an hour, for some position of ignominious security.

“ The doors of the palace flew open, a carriage and four dashed out from head-quarters with the Commander’s papers, another with the Treasury, and both disappeared in clouds of dust on the road to Naples.”

There had been a raid by enemy skirmishers, on a part of Caserta thought to be unwatched ; it was repulsed.

"The tenants of the carriages manifested every symptom of readiness for a start. Still the train stands inexorably still. The supplications to the Madonna are stilled by the stern order of a commanding officer to unhook the engine, followed by a noisy scene of expostulation and invective.

"Then the short twilight dies away—the Great Square glitters with a hundred lights, the camp fires shine out fitfully in the dark gusty night. A furious wind fills the square with clouds of dust and rattles down the leaves from the lime avenues. At the palace a crowd of soldiers throng the porticoes, pace to and fro on their watch, or sleep about the pavement close to their guns; piled rifles glitter in the faint light of the lanterns; all is ready for immediate action. Upstairs the Dictator and his staff are at dinner; a few sentinels and a crowd of clients round the mess-room door make up the simple splendour of the little court. Round the table are thirty or forty officers of all ages and manners, attired in the red shirt which is their leader's invariable costume. Amongst the rest, and in no conspicuous place, sits the man whose genius and daring have infused the breath of life and the energy of organisation into all the discordant elements of distrust, suffering, and suspicion. Gentleness, simplicity, and refinement are the qualities most easily read in the features of the greatest warrior of the day."

A long visit was paid to Mazzini and to Count Saffé, "another of the Roman triumvirate of 1848." The followers of Mazzini opposed the immediate annexation of Naples and Sicily by Piedmont, but Henry witnessed the striking demonstration in

Naples in favour of a United Italy, the great majority of the men carrying a " Si " (Yes) in their hats.

" It is of course a blow to the pride of the victorious Garibaldians to have to wait for the co-operation of an ally to complete the success which was at first exclusively their own, but the recent fierce hand-to-hand fighting and the complete failure of the King to carry their position supply ample grounds for mutual encouragement and increased self-reliance."

Garibaldi as well as Mazzini would have preferred a Republic of Naples and Sicily, if only for a time, to enable them to treat with Cavour, and to arrange for attacks on Rome and Venice before they were absorbed by Piedmont, but he was far too disinterested and patriotic to allow his own position as Dictator or his republican sympathies to stand against the wishes of the majority, and he loyally welcomed Victor Emmanuel. Henry continues (October 20) :

" Count Arivabene, the correspondent of the *Daily News*, who, like the correspondent of *The Times*—Eber—is quite as much a soldier as a writer, has come back from Capua, where he was a prisoner. He charged some Neapolitan on the 1st and got knocked down and carried off before he knew what had happened. He had been twelve years in exile in England. Eber, *The Times* man, is General of a division and a capital officer ; he is Hungarian.

" Count Arivabene had an interview with the King, who was most courteous to the prisoners ; the King considered the fate of the day on the 1st

to have been turned by the two English sailors who mounted a gun on the Capua Road and prevented the charge of the Neapolitan Cavalry. It is certain that it was as narrow an escape of a great defeat as could be ; at every point along the whole line the battle was just saved, and that was all.

" I have seen Garibaldi at the batteries and ' at dinner with his staff. Another celebrity here is M. Alexandre Dumas, whom Garibaldi has made Director of the Fine Arts and Curator of the Museo Borbonico, and Editor of the *Indipendente*.

" We had the most amusing interview with him ; he is as good-natured and vain and as absurd as possible . . . an astounding phenomenon of cheerful ignorance and unconscious profanity."

On October 27 Henry describes the landing of the English Volunteers and their formal reception, in pouring rain, by the population of Naples—

" each side regarding the other with as much astonishment as affection. . . . But one opinion prevailed as to the appearance and demeanour of the Volunteers, who have undertaken the task with an enthusiasm almost Quixotic, and though men just landed from a fortnight's voyage are seen to some disadvantage, they are pictures of neatness compared with the rudely attired hordes assembled at Santa Maria." Their officers had no experience in dealing with " the troublesome details of organising, controlling, or providing an irregular body of troops, . . . happily they were sent up at once to the camp, where they would find plenty of hard work and perhaps a little fighting."

The letters that have been preserved here end abruptly. Henry's return to London was perhaps hastened by the opening of the Law Courts, and we have no account from his graphic pen of the entry of the first King of Italy and Garibaldi into Naples on November 7, or the quiet departure of the Liberator of Italy by sea to his island farm, two days later—in Trevelyan's words, "almost unobserved, at break of day."

## CHAPTER V

### THE VICAR OF HARROW

MR. CUNNINGHAM was in full sympathy with his son's impressions of Italy. Like many other Englishmen, he had personal knowledge of Bourbon and Papal tyranny. He had once made some stay at Copenhagen, and formed an intimate friendship with the Portuguese Ambassador to the Court of Denmark. In his younger days the Ambassador was a man of rank and influence in his own country, and in company with a friend, an Italian Count, he had read many English works, such as Adam Smith's *Wealth of Nations* and others of a Liberal tendency. He and his friend lodged in the same flat, and one night he was awoke by a light and saw six or eight men in black cloaks, painted with flames, standing round his bed. They turned him over, looked at him, and went away ; he crept out of bed and he saw them bring his friend out of his room, cover him up in a cloak and carry him off, and from that day he never saw him again nor heard what had become of him. His friend's only crime was reading condemned books, one of which was Robertson's *Charles V.*



The man was completely crushed, he sought employment abroad, and when Mr. Cunningham knew him, he spent his mornings in walking on the ramparts and his evenings in playing at cards, without an attempt to use his evidently considerable abilities.

The Vicar's recollections were cherished by his children, and some of his stories were written down. His powers of persuasion had always been great, and two instances of this he loved to recall. Soon after his ordination he was sent to Gloucester to establish a branch of the Bible Society there. His companion in the mail-coach was a witty and agreeable man, who specially disliked "enthusiasm" and was going to Gloucester on purpose to oppose the project. They had a lengthy discussion, and the young curate made a mental note of his opponent's line of argument.

"When I got to the meeting," Mr. Cunningham would say, "there he was sitting with a solicitor by his side and a long file of motions or objections before him. He sent me a little note to ask when he should bring them forward—I answered, Never. . . . Well, I spoke, answering the objections he had brought forward as well as I could. When I had finished he wrapped up a guinea in a piece of paper with a request that his name might be put down as a subscriber to the Bible Society."

The other story at the end of his life showed the same argumentative power and conciliatory

spirit. A Baptist minister of the name of George came to Harrow and delivered a satirical lecture from his pulpit on the Prayer-book. The Vicar sent for him and mingled his remonstrances with so much kindly counsel that they became fast friends, and the minister would come to the Vicar for advice when he had difficulties with his own congregation.

Mr. Cunningham's last years were not, however, without their sorrows.

He survived almost all the children of his first family ; and his position of authority in the Church was not what it had been. In an early number of *The Harrovian* a lively criticism appeared of the Vicar's sacred poems, a piece of audacity which made quite a sensation at the time.

Mrs. Trollope, the authoress, and her more famous son lived for a time in Harrow Weald, in the house afterwards pictured as " Orley Farm " ; her popular novel—*The Vicar of Wrexhill*—was commonly taken to be a caricature of the Vicar of Harrow. It was " a vigorous and humorous onslaught upon the Evangelical party in the Church, untrue to fact but not to her convictions."

These attacks did not unduly depress the Vicar. He had one more public duty to perform before the task of his long day was finished. In September 1859 Dr. Vaughan gave a term's notice that he was going to resign. Amongst the candidates for the Head Mastership was Henry Montagu Butler. It seemed to Mr. Cunningham but yesterday that he had been constantly in and out of his house as



THE REV. J. W. CUNNINGHAM, VICAR OF HARROW.

*From a portrait by George Richmond, R.A., 1859.*

a bright school-boy, a year junior to his son Henry, and he thought him at first impossibly young for the post. The Vicar was by this time much the senior of John Lyon's six Governors, and from his long connection with the School and his knowledge of all the local conditions his opinion was bound to carry weight. He knew how much Henry admired his friend, and after studying the recommendations that he brought with him from Cambridge he determined to support Butler. The result was uncertain, as there was another excellent candidate in the field, but as soon as Butler was elected, the Vicar with quite youthful vigour and enthusiasm drove off to London to carry the good news to his mother. He lived long enough to see that the young head master gathered up the reins with great decision and dignity, and that the School was safe in his hands. He himself continued to relish his life to his eighty-second year; he offered a robust resistance to Death's advances, and his son remembered the resolute "No, no, no," which was one of his last conscious utterances. He must have been a lovable person in his home circle, for when the end came at last on September 30, 1861, Henry and Emily felt that there was nothing left to live for.

Mr. Cunningham's illness had called forth a burst of sympathy; at his funeral all Harrow seemed like a family of mourners; the National school-children sent little presents and loving farewell letters to his daughter; the old Vicar carried

with him to the grave what he most valued, the blessing of the poor.

Henry has left a vivid description of the last days in their dear old home :

“ The confusion attendant upon breaking up a long-established household had added to the distress of a great domestic change. We were clearing away the débris which one generation after another as it flowed along seemed to have left behind it. Memorials which had no longer any significance—locks of hair without an owner or a name—letters from unknown writers on subjects no longer interesting. . . . Already the house was a dreary sight . . . an air of bustle, unsettlement, and change had come over the most tranquil and orderly of households ; the china figures which beyond the memory of the oldest of us had nodded from the drawing-room cupboard had descended from their throne ; the carriage had gone away full of books and pictures ; the pony had departed in one direction, the cows in another ; old Purcell, our gardener, had effected a final raid upon the pears before coming to ask me for a character. Every thing and person had an air of ‘ Fuimus ’ about them—the end had come—a cycle was closed.”

The young Head Master became chairman of a committee to raise a memorial to “ the beloved Vicar of Harrow.”

Henry took his sister to Italy, and the rest and the beauty gradually restored her spirits. They were the best of travelling companions with their common love of art and music, of literature and history.

On arrival at Florence they heard that Arthur Clough had just died there. Henry hurried off to see Mrs. Clough, a cousin of Miss Nightingale's; she was thankful for his help, and Emily supplied her with mourning. She had a sister-in-law with her and seemed "very resolute and self-possessed." On November 15 Henry went with her to the chapel of the Protestant cemetery, and there the little company of four ladies, Henry, and the physician gathered round the poet's grave.

"It was a lovely, cloudless morning, . . . the cypresses and pines rising among the monuments, contrasting finely with the blue sky; no lovelier or quieter resting-place could offer itself to the dreams of a weary man. As the service was read the bells of the city were chiming merrily, all the air was full of cheerful sounds—but one felt that Death in a strange land has after all an additional sadness. It seemed such a contrast to the last funeral I attended, where the grief of one was common to all."

Three days after this lonely funeral came the news of Montagu Butler's engagement to Miss Elliot, daughter of Mr. Elliot, of The Mount, Harrow. Henry Cunningham knew the family well and the two charming sisters, and was much excited on "such an addition to Butler's list of successes. A man so rich in other forms of happiness should at least have been crossed in love and then married a shrew."

On their return Henry and his sister took a house,

No. 6, Craven Hill, Hyde Park, where they lived for nearly four years. They moved in 1866 to Hyde Park Street, and immediately afterwards he met with a great disaster. He had till that time combined his practice at the Bar, which never became large, with journalism, but towards the end of 1865 he was induced to lay aside his profession and to become a partner in a Tea business, supposed to be in a highly flourishing condition. He put his whole property into the concern, and his sister invested half of hers. Before many weeks had passed the senior partner absconded, carrying with him the whole of their capital. Henry, left to face all liabilities, was completely ruined; he was made a bankrupt and his house was of course disposed of with his other property. Henry and Emily went for the moment to live with their sister and brother-in-law Mr. and Mrs. Stephen, and stayed there, as most welcome guests, as long as they required a home.

Henry showed the utmost resolution and calmness in this misfortune. His chief concern was for members of his family who, like his sister, had invested their money on the strength of his connection with the business; and later in life, when he had retrieved his fortunes, he was happy in being able to pay back all that had been lost in this way.

He had great support in his strong family affections. When he entered on the next phase of his career he wrote to Mrs. Stephen :

“ And now good-bye, my dearest sister ; you have indeed bound me to you all by a thousand acts of love and tenderness which must ever occupy a large place in my thoughts, and be one of my pleasantest recollections of my home life, now for a while interrupted.”



## CHAPTER VI

### EARLY LITERARY WORK

THERE can be few greater pleasures to a man with literary tastes than to escape from the drudgery that his daily work involves into a story-book world of his own creation, if he has a firm grip of his plot and an intimate knowledge of his characters. His personal life may not be shaping itself at all in accordance with his hopes and expectations, but his dream-children are born under a happier star, and if tragedy comes into their lives they are at least shielded from the commonplace.

To Henry Cunningham this creative and imaginative faculty was a keen delight and interest, and when not actually writing he was an acute observer of men and manners, and stored up in his memory the little characteristic touches which gave so much grace and point to his pictures of society. His best novels were written in mature life after many years of work and study in India, where he chronicled the sayings and doings of Anglo-Indian society with the utmost felicity and truth.

He was content to find his material in the places and among the people he knew best ; his delicate vignettes were highly finished character-sketches ;

the talk was the talk of an intellectual type of "good" society slightly idealised—he never sought to picture either the miseries or the merits of the poorer classes among whom he did not live, or to find a background for improbable happenings in Arctic seas or tropical islands. His novels give a carefully drawn picture of Victorian society, before the entertaining of friends was made difficult by the fashions of ostentatious wealth and luxury, and where the cut and thrust of conversation worthy of the name had not yet been largely superseded by bridge and whist drives.

*Wheat and Tares, A Tale*, published anonymously by Saunders & Otley in 1861, was the author's first serious venture. An appreciative notice appeared in the *Saturday Review* of March 1, 1862 :

"The great merit of the book is undoubtedly in its dialogue. The conversation is more like conversation, and yet amusing and brisk, than appears in one novel in a hundred. The things the people say are all what any set of pleasant relations and friends at a watering-place might say to each other, but they are always entertaining and contribute to our knowledge of the character of the speaker."

The book is compared with Trollope's *Semi-Detached House*, as a specimen of a tale compressed into a small canvas, and the preference is given to *Wheat and Tares*. The best-drawn character was held to be the Dean of Oldchurch :

"He is a prodigy of ecclesiastical tact—a man who without direct falsehood tries to please and to

manage everyone, while at the same time he slightly sneers at them. This cannot be called an easy character to draw . . . of a man who is not a bad man and is very wide awake. The author has succeeded in producing this effect, and to have succeeded in it is a great success."

The one little volume into which much of the author's most intimate and tender feelings were compressed delighted his sisters and more intimate friends, while some of the elder members of the family scented something of heterodoxy in its opinions. At Claydon the book had a warm welcome. The atmosphere of the house had been greatly changed by Sir Harry Verney's second marriage, in 1858, to Parthenope Nightingale, Florence's elder sister by a year. Her sympathy with her sister had brought her a large circle of friends of the most varied opinions and creeds; sharing her husband's interests as a Liberal Member of Parliament, she had a number of acquaintances on both sides of the House. Lady Verney was herself a graceful writer and an excellent critic, and she gathered round her sofa at Claydon by a log-fire in winter, or in summer in her "salon vert" on the lawn, a remarkable number of clever men in the literary, artistic, and political world, and a few bright and charming girls quite devoted to her and to Sir Harry, who retained his youthful keenness for all sorts of knowledge beyond his ninetieth year.

In this circle Henry Cunningham always had a

warm welcome. Lady Verney delighted in his society, and read and discussed his novel with her fine discrimination and sympathy. It had been a great pleasure to the brother and sister, when introduced at Rome to the American sculptor Storey, himself an author, to find that he had read *Wheat and Tares* "with great admiration."

Two years later the author produced another novel, *Late Laurels*, which came out at the same time as Trollope's *Small House at Allington*, and their books were again classed together by the critics. Both seemed to belong to the same school ; of which Mr. Trollope was said to represent the stronger and more genial, and Mr. Cunningham the more polished and sceptical aspect.

"The shadowy outlines of female characters are charming in their delicacy of drawing and fidelity to nature—but Margaret in *Late Laurels*, and Rachel in *Wheat and Tares*, deserve an elaboration which would have been worthy of Miss Austen, and which has not been given them.

"Everybody without exception talks well ; the stories are witty, the bon-mots admirable, but we cannot remember afterwards whether they were told us by the lady with blue eyes in the pink dress, or the heroine with pink eyes in the blue dress, the characters being scarcely differentiated from each other."

A kinder critic in the *Westminster Review* considered the book a decided advance on *Wheat and*

*Tares*, which was the opinion of many of Mr. Cunningham's friends.

“ To paint the contrast between the simple force of a noble nature and the artificial factitious brilliancy of a character moulded by the influences of modern society is the object attempted in *Late Laurels*, and it has been ably achieved. The character of Erle is the most interesting in the book ; the way in which this jaded man of the world recovers life and tone under the influence of Margaret's simple goodness is very delicately worked out.”

The success of the two novels, though not all that he could have wished, was enough to encourage their author to persevere in weaving his thoughts and experience into a form which was the chief relaxation of a busy official life, and brought him into sympathetic relations with many people he would not otherwise have influenced or known.

In looking through the whole of his considerable literary output, Sir Henry's sketch of Lord Bowen's life would probably be considered as his best work, and as a model of all that a biography ought to be ; meanwhile, in these early novels he was perfecting his style and giving definiteness to his opinions.

## CHAPTER VII

### INDIA

THE year 1866 had been one of unexpected trouble to the devoted brother and sister, but in the midst of financial ruin and difficulties of all kinds which Henry Cunningham met with great courage, an appointment was offered him which was to change the whole current of his life, and concentrate his energies for the next twenty-one years upon the problems of Indian law and administration. He was made Government Advocate and Legal Adviser to the Punjab, with his head-quarters at Lahore.

On arrival at Calcutta his imagination was at once stirred. "At present," he wrote, "of course the population is nothing but a huge, quiet, black mystery flowing all around one, and no more penetrable than a dark, silent pool." This impression remained with him, and a few sentences from the striking opening of his biography of Earl Canning may be quoted here :

"India has added a thrilling chapter to the Englishman's national romance—a chapter which more perhaps than any other in our annals abounds

in interest and pathos—in dark, tragic scenes, strange episodes—the success of splendid daring—the supremacy of the constant mind over adverse fate—the determined mood which gains reinforcement from hope and consolation from despair. It has been the arena in which the qualities which Englishmen most prize in themselves and their fellow-countrymen have been exhibited on a grand scale—the iron will—the unwavering purpose—the practical aptitude for the management of human affairs—long enduring fortitude—devotion to duty—the generous contagion of self-sacrifice, when courage glows into heroism and the commonplace becomes sublime.”

Henry’s first leisure moments were spent in sharing his earliest impressions with his brother-in-law :

“ CALCUTTA.  
“ *December 17, 1866.*

“ MY DEAR STEPHEN,—

“ I have been waiting to thank you for your kind letter till I had some more edifying news to send you than were to be had on board our miserable little vessel, where the sole possible topics of interest were devouring execrable food, learning Hindustanee, and conducting flirtations—the first two only, as far as I was concerned. I am sure that the recollection of all that you and dear Mary have done for me and the hearty affection you have always shown us will follow me all my life . . . to remember in evil times when one fancies that the world is wound up the wrong way and everything going to the bad. . . .

"I have enjoyed my visit to Maine very much and found him looking extraordinarily better than I had ever seen him and working away with great energy. I should think his chief annoyance was the absolute inferiority to himself of all his colleagues, and the sort of miserable, ignorant, half-gossiping, and wholly malicious criticism which such a community as Calcutta engenders.

"I send you a copy of his speech at the opening of the Legislative Council. . . . The great point seems to be that India has till recently been ruled despotically by admirable officers in rough-and-ready fashion, and that now this condition of things is giving way to one in which the despotism has to be systematised and legalised and therefore reference to the central Authority is constantly being made."

Neither the writer nor the recipient of the letter could foresee that this great task of codifying the scattered and chaotic Indian laws, worked at for seven years by Sir Henry Maine, was to be laid on Sir James Stephen and splendidly carried through in a very short time.

"There is a prophet now in the North, Loodiana, who is converting people wholesale to the gentlest possible order of moral religion, but gives the Government alarm enough to have the place expressly garrisoned in his honour. The Hindoos seem overpowered by a sort of feminine priggism and are in mortal terror of shocking themselves and their neighbours by some tiny impropriety—the Mahomedans are essentially *improper*, hate all sorts of restrictions and are much more like ourselves



in their vehement turbulent passions. The jingles in the language are extremely good and very popular. Honble. Mr. Byng, for instance, becomes Humbledy Bumbledy Bang Sahib—Mr. Dalrymple, D—d fool Sahib—Maine is announced as Mem Sahib—"Mem" meaning Lady—what they make of Cunningham I do not like to speculate."

Henry Cunningham reached India when what he called "the torrential flow of events" of the anxious years of the Mutiny was only beginning to subside. The year 1861 had been marked by disastrous floods and widespread outbreaks of cholera, and it was natural that Englishmen responsible for the government of a country still palpitating from dangers past and dangers just avoided should have been anxious to strengthen English rule, political and military. These conditions help to explain Henry Cunningham's steady resistance to the movement for Indian Home Rule; and the instinctive conservatism of an English lawyer added to these first impressions, prompted his uncompromising opposition to Lord Ripon and his attempted reforms, even twenty years later.

When he took up his work in India in 1866, Sir John Lawrence was at the helm and commanded his unquestioning loyalty.

The next summer found him in the full swing of work at Lahore. He writes to his sister Mary (July 17, 1867):

"There is a great deal that is disagreeable going on

here, which, though profitable and improving to me, is sufficiently odious to make one half repent having anything to do with it. Quarrels here do rage and blaze with a sort of barbarous frenzy, as if society were resolved into its original conditions and everybody went about with clubs and had his clutch on his neighbour's throat. . . .

" You must tell F. that I had a grand triumph the other day in getting in a letter which the Judge resolved should not be admitted as evidence. I wanted it especially, so I remembered his doctrine of never despairing, went in courageously for the *res gestæ* doctrine, and after a stubborn fight got the letter admitted and won my case in consequence. F. will remember coaching me up in it at Southgate."

Emily Cunningham joined her brother at Lahore in the autumn of 1867, and they settled down to a happy social life. They were welcomed everywhere; his conversation and her singing and their eager interest in everything worth knowing made them a great addition to Anglo-Indian society. They were not forgotten at home; Mary Stephen sent them Thackeray's, Trollope's, and George Eliot's novels as they were published, and the *Pall Mall Gazette*, for which her husband was so largely responsible, came out to Henry with special personal interest as expressing his brother-in-law's opinions on the political, social, and literary questions of the day. Henry sent him in return careful accounts of Indian affairs, which he felt were little known at home. The following extracts are from a long letter containing a sketch-map and many more details about

the trade and policy of the native government of Cashmere :

" LAHORE

" *Sunday, February 13, 1868.*

" . . . The sudden arrival of our pianoforte, and the excitement of superintending about twelve black carpenters in unpacking it, have broken rather into a quiet morning that I was hoping to have spent in your and Mary's society. Few absentees, I should think, ever had a pleasanter mode of knowing their friends' minds and moods, than the *P.M.G.* (which I read assiduously) affords to us. I often long to have a good chat with you over the various subjects therein discussed. . . .

" One general impression we get is that England is a wonderful scene of high pressure, bustle, hurry, and worry just now—some strong impetus driving everybody on, and the old sign-posts are all indistinct and distrusted. . . . The horrible physical misery of enormous classes and the complete moral abandonment of others, *vide* Sheffield, etc., are ugly features in the picture, despite all our satisfactory patching of unsatisfactory institutions. . . .

" Harrison's satire on Matthew Arnold is capital fun—Arnold's dandyism is always so near being ridiculous, that it only needed somebody really ruffled and in earnest to make him look thoroughly absurd.

" I always think of seeing him put to flight by a big swan in a pond at Hertford, which, while he was sentimentalising about it, came waddling out of the water in the most unpoetical manner and remained master of the field. Still, he is such a nice

fellow that it seems half a shame for anyone 'to heave a brick at him.' . . .

"I am sending you a few notes about the Maharajah of Cashmere. . . . Sir J. Lawrence is supposed to have a very strong feeling about his conduct in the Mutiny and to be disposed to condone all shortcomings in remembrance of this. . . . To give you an idea of the Maharajah's conduct, he got leave last year to come to Hurdwar, the sacred fair, with 500 soldiers as retinue. He came with over 3,000 ; when they got to Hurdwar the cholera broke out and the Maharajah got into a funk. He fled back precipitately, broke all the quarantine rules, which had been framed with a view to stopping the spread of infection, actually stowed away the dead bodies of his servants in the public stage carriages, and so effectually carried back the seeds of cholera to his capital that Sirinuggar was losing hundreds a day for several weeks in the autumn. One of his vagaries is that he is very *dévo*t and believes his father's soul is in some fish, and consequently forbids all fishing in certain rivers."

A few months later he wrote to his sister on the eve of Sir John Lawrence's departure from India and the arrival of Lord Mayo :

"October 23, 1868.

"I have just been paying a flying visit to Simla. . . . I had the good luck to hear Maine speak in Council on a Punjab Tenancy Bill, which is a matter of extreme interest and importance in this part of the world, as anything affecting the rights of land in a population of twenty millions must be. The

Government have taken a line favourable to the cultivators as opposed to the proprietary class, and the opponents of the measure think that this will clash with popular sentiment on the subject. However, I always feel with Sir J. Lawrence as one does about a pilot in a dangerous sea, one has got the person undoubtedly in the world who combines most experience and power and it is mere waste of words to 'speak to the man at the wheel.' His speech on the occasion consisted of about a half-hour's narrative of what his twenty years' experience had taught him about the matter. It was illustrated with all sorts of personal information, conversations, etc.—it ranged all over N. India and convinced one more than anything else I have heard. . . . Maine spoke with extraordinary brilliancy and much more fire and pathos than when I heard him before. His was, I thought, quite up to the first flight of Parliamentary speaking, and from its completeness and lucidity not unlike Gladstone. His tone of voice has got a sort of earnest pathos about it that I should think would be very effective in Parliament. Sir W. Mansfield is a fine-looking fellow and spoke with quite the air of the English gentleman of the first water. I sat next him at lunch afterwards and quite lost my heart to him. He espoused the side of the landlords against Maine and spoke with great force and dignity. . . . Altogether it was a curious sight to see the way in which the interests of a couple of hundred millions of people are provided for in a quiet way and wonderfully well on the whole—but it looked and sounded so uncommonly like one of our Oxford after-dinner debates, that one felt quite startled to find it result in anything so august as an 'Act.' ”

In the following year Fitzjames Stephen was offered the post of Legal Member of Council in India in succession to Sir Henry Maine. By this time he had made himself a great reputation at the Bar, he was a Q.C., and was much attached to his home and his children, and was busy with literary as well as legal work. He was at first disposed to decline it, but such important tasks were awaiting completion in India that he was finally induced to accept the post, to the great joy of his brother-in-law, as shown in the following letter.

“ MURREE.

“ *October 2, 1869.*

“ MY DEAR MARY,—

“ It seems hardly credible that when you get this F. will be almost on the move for India and that the new chapter in your lives will have begun. . . . I cannot bring myself to regard it otherwise than with intense satisfaction. . . . I do think it is a blessing for one's life to run in a somewhat more enterprising and interesting line than the ten thousand well-to-do folk who live in ‘Squares’ moral and intellectual, as well as physical, and are so distractingly monotonous and uninteresting.

“ I have a sort of certainty that F. will be of great weight and do a great work out here. There are few men of extraordinary powers in any way, and the Government of India is, I believe, immensely in need of fresh, vigorous, and independent thought, by men of grasp and energy and knowledge. There are one hundred things about which I long to talk with F. and which I know he will find infinitely

more interesting than the very topmost pinnacle of professional success."

This confident anticipation was fully justified. With all his passion for work Fitzjames Stephen, in succession to Sir Henry Maine, threw himself into the great task of codifying the Indian laws. A short spell of illness was the only break in two and a half years of such incessant and strenuous labours as might well have filled up five.

Mrs. Stephen came out in January 1870, and though the trial of leaving her children was great, it was a time of much happiness and interest.

Henry Cunningham held a temporary secretaryship in his brother-in-law's office in 1871. This appointment, which was for a year, led to his finally leaving Lahore. The glamour that had surrounded their first Indian home had a little faded, and his chief regret in departing is that he regrets it so little. He writes to his sister, who had made a hurried journey home to look after her children and was on her way back :

" It is painful in leaving a place where you have lived for four and a half years to find what little root you have taken, and what a sort of traveller after all you are. Lahore is, I think, a petty and uncongenial scene of action, . . . no one would, I am sure, believe the squabbles that go on. . . ."

Henry Cunningham was more missed at Lahore than he had realised—an affectionate address signed

by the members of the Bar, Anglo-Indian and Indian, and sent to him as "Late Officiating Judge of the Chief Court of the Punjab, Lahore," followed him into retirement, expressing their sense of his "assiduity, ability, patience, and courtesy" in the discharge of his duties, and their gratitude for reforms he had introduced, which had been a great saving of time to members of the Bar who appeared before him.

Their departure was with a great cavalcade of horses and ponies for the long march to Simla (March 30, 1871), Robert Egerton lending Emily a horse which was trustworthy and sure for the hills. Henry had used a vacation to draw up a statement on revenue matters which he was publishing, to the wrath of some officials, but with the approval of Sir John Strachey. The Stephens occupied a house at Simla known as The Observatory, and the sisters were much together both there and in Calcutta. Mrs. Stephen returned home at the end of 1871 and her husband rejoined her in the April following.

From the interesting account of Sir James Fitzjames Stephen's work in India contributed by Mr. Leslie Stephen to the *Dictionary of National Biography* we learn that—

"several measures of great importance were passed by Stephen with his colleagues, that which was most exclusively his own being the Evidence Act of March 1872. He took the chief part in preparing many other Acts of great complexity and involving delicate questions of policy. He was profoundly impressed by the great work achieved



by the English in India and the comparatively slovenly nature of English administration and legislation at home. On the voyage home he began a series of letters expressing these opinions, which appeared in the *Pall Mall Gazette* and were afterwards published."

## CHAPTER VIII

### A ROMANCE AND A MARRIAGE

AFTER the break-up of the family party at Calcutta, Emily went back to England with Mrs. Stephen, to rejoin her brother later, when he had taken up his new appointment as Advocate-General at Madras. But before he or Mr. Stephen had left Calcutta, came the startling news of the murder of Lord Mayo when visiting the Andaman Islands. Henry writes :

“ February 15, 1872.

“ MY DEAREST MARY,—

“ This terrible catastrophe will be a great blow to you and fill you with anxiety about F.’s return. . . . If Lord Napier is G.G., as I suppose likely, there will be plenty of experience on the Council, tho’ one cannot but feel glad that they should value and depend on F.’s counsel and aid. . . . Lord Mayo’s death is almost too sad to think of ; at present we seem simply *confounded*, nobody ever having thought of such a possibility and everything that depended on Lord Mayo having come suddenly to a standstill. It is terrible to think what it must be for her, poor thing ; they all seemed such an affectionate set of people.”

" MADRAS.

" May 2, 1872

" DEAREST MARY,—

" We arrived here yesterday in a hurricane of rain and wind, which has been raging ever since, and has given us rather a ' damping ' view of Madras as yet. It all looks very quiet with a decided possibility of dullness about it, but the people seem very kind and friendly and I believe are fond of the life. . . . Mr. Arbuthnot the pro tem. Governor is very pleasant, a fine, manly sort of civilian ; he is probably going up, he tells me, to succeed Mr. Ellis in Council.

" By this time you will have got F. home again—it will be delightful for you both, dearest Mary, to have this chapter of your life, in many ways an anxious and troublesome one for you, closed so happily and honorably. Nothing can be better than the reputation with which F. has left India, and the appreciation of his services by the only part of the community whose opinion is worth having. The Acts of his time will make a mark in the whole administration of India, and put an end to a deal of humbug that has been allowed to overgrow law both here and in England.

" I shall not, however, be content till he is invited to codify the English law—a task the grandest that could be committed to any man. . . . It seems to me that really thoughtful and careful legislation, . . . which serious men design as the properest machine they can contrive, is almost the highest act of statesmanship, and interesting in a way that scarcely any other public work can be."

Dante, long ago, had been of this opinion, when,

quoting from Aristotle, he said that "neither the morning nor the evening star is so admirable as Justice."

Madras had the advantage of being a much larger community than Lahore with wider interests, "indeed, Lord Napier had given the Madras ladies to understand that he thought them very superior to their Calcutta rivals."

Henry's chambers looked out on the surf, and he felt that the air was "full of the sea."

With the exception of a short visit to England in 1873, Madras was his home for five years. That visit was marked by the beginning of a much-valued friendship with Miss Nightingale, in which their serious business was tempered by wit on both sides. The correspondence opened thus :

"35, SOUTH STREET, PARK LANE, W.

"October 29, 1873.

"Florence Nightingale is informed by her sister Lady Verney that Mr. Cunningham wishes to see her before he leaves England, with regard to Nursing affairs in Madras.

"She is afraid this information must be incorrect as her Indian correspondence for the last ten years on the subject of Nursing alone would fill this house : and with Madras a room of this house.

"And its fruitlessness can only be matched by its size.

"Nevertheless, if Mr. Cunningham takes it up, possibly the Impossible may be done. . . .

"She encloses the starting paper of her Indian Nursing correspondence : not for its value but the

reverse. F. N. must ask Mr. Cunningham to return it to her, unread or read—as she has destroyed all her other copies to make room. She would have her Madras correspondence ready for Mr. Cunningham to see: only she fears a path could not then be cleared for Mr. Cunningham to enter the room.”

Henry Cunningham was made a Commissioner by the Duke of Buckingham in 1876, and in that capacity he vigorously attacked the municipal authorities on account of the terrible health-conditions of the city and the Fort. He told them that no personal discourtesy was intended, but—

“having lived patiently in a stink for several years I am resolved to do so no longer. I smelt a very bad smell the morning I landed in Madras in 1872, and it seems to have been in my nose ever since. . . . Drive along the beach and you are sickened at one place and suffocated at another, pass the Fort and you will be confronted by a smell that is I verily believe the worst known to mankind, . . . and the unfortunate soldiers have to sleep in it. . . . We have almost the worst death-rate of any city in India—though we have for hours on most days a sea-breeze which carries health wherever we do not succeed in turning it into a gale of poison.”

His mastery of detail and his fearlessness of unpopularity were like Miss Nightingale's, and before he could give his second lecture, one of the corrupt officials concerned had fled from the country and another was in prison. He pointed out that the Government and the rich people generally were

wont to recruit their energies “ on the breezy heights of the Neilgherries,” leaving the workers and the troops and the patients in the hospital to “ the putrid pools of Madras ” and the crowded miseries of the plain below.

Lord Northbrook succeeded Lord Mayo as Viceroy, but there is less mention during these years in the letters of the central government, Henry being much absorbed by the affairs of the Southern Province, with its own pressing local questions.

It was during this time at Madras that his best-known novel, *The Chronicles of Dustypore*, was published, and was recognised at once as breaking new ground and as giving an admirable and entirely fresh picture of Anglo-Indian society. While the author was studying all the most serious problems, political, financial, and legislative, of our rule, he felt that these were already to be found in Reports and Blue Books and solid histories to which he was contributing his share, and he threw himself heart and soul into a holiday task of describing the ephemeral society life of Calcutta and Simla from his own personal and intimate knowledge, with the scenery and climate which formed the background of the story.

An admirable review of the book appeared in the *Spectator* (June 12, 1875) :

“ If any one wants to know why so many observant Anglo-Indians think their Empire built on sand, a dominion which might pass away suddenly and men

scarcely understand either the method of its departure or the reason why, let him read and ponder this novel. . . . The characters in Dustypore live, and make love, marry and quarrel, and are happy and miserable in a world of their own, separated by an invisible but impassable wall from the larger world above, below, and on all sides of them. . . . The author wishes to describe Indian domestic life as vividly as he can, and most Anglo-Indians will allow that he has been exceedingly successful, that he has described Indian ways and peculiarities and specialities of character with a touch at once light and accurate; that he has recalled to them scenes and character so well that they are tempted to exclaim: 'How vivid!' And the book is vivid, all the more vivid because the habit of regarding the native population as if it were something like the burning atmosphere, inevitable and endurable, but, as it were, outside life, is the peculiarity of Anglo-Indian society which separates it from any other society in the modern world. No other is unintentionally so absolutely exclusive. There is no blunder on the author's part. The average civilians or soldiers once released from 'duty' do live to themselves and each other in a world which happens to be placed in India, but has no more relation to the population than the life on board a passenger ship to the ocean she may happen to be traversing. Of course all depends on that ocean. Of course a storm makes a confusion in the ship. But till the storm comes, life among the passengers can and does go on, without knowledge of seamanship, or recollection very often that the ship is a ship and not a floating hotel. When work is to be done, or danger arises, all inattention ceases; but in India,

as in a passenger ship, 'life' and work, though separated only by a plank, are separated permanently in a way which nothing but a catastrophe breaks through."

Maud Vernon, the heroine of the story, is more carefully drawn and her history is carried on further than had been attempted in the earlier novels. The triumph of the beautiful girl on her first arrival in India; the dangers that beset the young wife, early parted from her husband, and the generosity and understanding of the husband which bring her back to her better self, are told with a refinement of feeling that showed that the writer had lived with and had revered good women.

To complain of the "superficiality" of the *Chronicles* is to blame the subject rather than the author; if the butterfly girl and frisky matron, the smart young officer and the able official "who cultivates foppery," are more frivolous than we can readily tolerate, we know and they know that if, and when, tragedy comes, they will show all the courage and grit of their race, with "character packed away somewhere inside them" which will be quickly developed in the time of need.

Henry Cunningham came to England on the termination of his appointment in April 1877, leaving Madras in the grip of the terrible famine of 1876-7, which the Governor, the Duke of Buckingham, was fighting with great energy.

Then came the supreme happiness of his life, in his engagement to the Hon. Emily Lawrence, eldest



unmarried daughter of the former Viceroy, Lord Lawrence, who of all Indian statesmen Henry most admired.

His first words were to Lady Stephen :

“ I am sure no one ever had a truer and kinder sister than you have been to me, and I am glad that the great event of my life should have come about under your roof and with your abetment. I feel that no congratulations which my friends offer me can overstate the greatness of my good fortune or the prospect of happiness which it offers to me.”

The hopes formed that day never grew dim : they were lovers to the end, nor when death came were they long parted.

The letters about his engagement must have been very welcome to him, as his old friends were quite unanimous in their opinion of his good fortune.

Miss Nightingale, who had always had an enthusiastic admiration for Lord Lawrence, wrote with characteristic brevity and cordiality—

“ May I give the bride joy,  
May I give the bridegroom joy ?  
I do from the bottom of my heart.

FLORENCE NIGHTINGALE.”

Warm congratulations that recalled old Harrow and Oxford days kept pouring in. Charles Bowen wrote :

“ I have no doubt at all that your wife will be perfect, and no doubt either that she will be happy.”

Mrs. Vaughan wrote from the Temple :

" How truly good and kind of you to find time to turn to us in this moment of profound and absorbing joy ! Indeed you are not mistaken in believing that you have our warm and true sympathy. If you had married *any* one, the event would have been interesting to us. But you have selected so rare a treasure, so really *costly* a jewel that we are filled with satisfaction and happiness. . . . No one can ever know Miss Lawrence without feeling great admiration for her. May every blessing be with you both in your far-distant home, and may you long be spared all adverse winds—and cruel storms—and be allowed to enjoy a sweet and blessed sunshine through Life's uncertain Voyage. Dr. Vaughan sends his best and kindest love to you. He came home quite enchanted with the evening he had spent beside you.

" Yrs. most truly,  
" C. VAUGHAN."

Dr. Montagu Butler sends him a large framed copy of the Madonna di San Sisto—" which has long been our favourite among all pictures." He gladly accedes to the request that he should take a share in the marriage service.

" Maclagan is a very dear old Cambridge friend, so that we shall have no difficulty in establishing an entente cordiale as to the division of the service. All seems now wonderfully near—what a difference one short month will have made in your life ! You will indeed feel proud in returning to India with

such a bride, knowing that all will welcome her for her father's sake as well as your own."

There is a pathetic letter from Leslie Stephen, mourning the loss of his first wife, Thackeray's youngest daughter :

"Many congratulations will come to you which must be far more valuable than mine ; but nobody will write with a stronger conviction that a happy marriage is the one thing which, after a certain time, makes life worth living, and, alas ! the one thing which even as remembered makes life tolerable when it can hardly be said to be worth living on its own account. I hope with all my heart that you may have as much of the happiness as possible and keep it as long. You must have thought me rather a surly and inaccessible kind of being this time ; but though I am a hermit I have not become a misanthrope and am glad to hear of any good fortune for my friends."

They had long been friends in India and Miss Lawrence consented to a short engagement. They were married on July 28, 1877, at St. Mary Abbot, Kensington. They paid some family visits in the autumn ; Henry Cunningham was made a Judge of the High Court of Calcutta and was to return to India at the end of the year.

The bride's graciousness and beauty made a delightful impression wherever they went ; Parthenope Lady Verney writes to Henry in September :

"We enjoyed your visit very much and the sight

of the beginning of your new life which will, we so earnestly hope, be a happy one—it will be a true and useful one we well know. It was a great pleasure to make acquaintance with your wife and to be able to realise a little of the future of one who has always been a very interesting nephew to us. Your uncle has such a strong feeling for India that your successful work there gives you another hold on him, and as for me you will very soon hear of my leading up the conversation so as to be able to quote an observation of ‘my nephew the Judge!’ as the first man of the family of whom we are all so proud.

“My sister was talking and thinking much of your letter to her; she had heard from the Duke of Buckingham about irrigation and other things. I suppose the question has made way at this desperate cost of lives. There is going to be a meeting in Buckingham, summoned by your uncle, for a subscription to go to the Duke. A Resolution on Irrigation and its virtues is to follow, and he wants to suggest a Commission on the question. What do you say?”

Not even during those too brief holiday weeks could the miseries of India be forgotten. Happily the bride was a Lawrence, and used to seeing all her men-folk put public duty far before rest or pleasure.

Madras was reckoned next to Delhi the most unhealthy city in India. Miss Nightingale had been working for years on its drainage and water-supply with the warm support of Lord Napier as long as he was Governor there. Now she was relying on

the Duke of Buckingham, with his known mastery of detail, to go into these questions, when the famine gave them a tragic urgency. "Governess of the Governors of India and Empress of Scavengers," as Mr. Jowett called her, she had asked Henry Cunningham to come and see her on his first arrival (May 17, 1877).

"I should be very sorry not to hear about Madras's Drainage, Hospital, Municipality, tho' it is an agonising subject to me when I can do little or nothing."

She wrote again (June 2, 1877):

"I received your mem. this morning anent this terrible Madras drainage or non-drainage, and God save the right, or rather God save the wrong—for the right will save itself."

And now that he was shortly returning, she wrote from Derbyshire:

*"November 29, 1877.*

"MY DEAR SIR,—

"I am coming to London to see you, please God, before you leave us (December 10 draws terribly near). . . . I would make any hour that is convenient to you suit me, as your time is too important.

"Two suggestions have been often sent me from Madras which, if they were of any value, have probably been thought over by you hundreds of times.

“ *One*—that the orphans in the relief camps, who with the destitute children form their main population, should be taught useful trades, instead of going back to swell the agricultural hosts.

“ *The other*—that the only way to raise the ryots, who seem to be getting poorer and poorer every year, out of the money-lenders’ hands (into which alone goes the ryot’s full crop—if he has one), would be a system of small loans at a moderate rate of interest—money supplied by English capital (I presume under official superintendence and management)—to the ryot, thus entering into competition with the native usurers on their own ground.”

During the next ten years Henry was one of Miss Nightingale’s faithful lieutenants in India. Outside his own work he took an active part in the sanitation of Calcutta, and when at last, under Lord Dufferin’s rule, a Government Sanitary Board was established in every province, it was based on a draft prepared by Henry Cunningham, Colonel Yule, and Florence Nightingale.

We return to December 1877. The farewells were over, and Mr. Justice and the Hon. Mrs. Cunningham sailed for India, he to take up the duties of a more dignified and responsible office at the centre of government, and each to enjoy what to each was the highest form of earthly bliss—the company of the other.

“ Marriage ”—he had entered in his notebook—“ is an association of two individuals in which the woman takes charge of the happiness of both.”

And what is to be said of the devoted sister who had been Henry's close companion for the last sixteen years ? Long afterwards she confessed to her brother that when she knew that another Emily was to reign in his heart and home, she felt that she could never laugh again ; but she gave no sign of regret that might dim his happiness, and made a sphere of work for herself in a nursing home which she started at Hemel Hempstead.

## CHAPTER IX

### FAMINE AND WAR

MR. JUSTICE CUNNINGHAM and his wife were now settled in Calcutta, which was to be their home for the next eleven years, with a move to Simla in the hot season. They found Lord Lytton in the second year of his Viceroyalty, and in the midst of actual famine and impending war which made his term of office so troubled and difficult. He had been sent out by Mr. Disraeli to proclaim Victoria as Empress of India on January 1, 1877. The great Durbar at Delhi lacked nothing in splendour, but the complete failure of the crops in Southern and Western India and the intrigues of Russia in Afghanistan menaced internal distress and foreign aggression.

To the Cunninghams the cordial welcome offered them by Lord and Lady Lytton brought them both into the inner circle of interest which centred at Government House. Mr. Cunningham admired Lord Lytton's great ability and industry, and their intimate daily intercourse gave him the opportunity of discussing privately the Indian questions he had thought over for so many years, but which his official position prevented his advocating in public ;



their common love of literature formed another close bond, and they were both Harrovians. To Mrs. Cunningham, Lady Lytton's friendship was one of the happiest features in her new life.

Early in 1878 the Viceroy, having seen for himself the effects of this appalling calamity, appointed a Famine Commission (with General Sir Robert Strachey as President, and Mr. Justice Cunningham as Secretary) which visited the afflicted districts, and elaborated, after some years of work, a great scheme of railroads and irrigation and a code of rules to be put in force on the occurrence of dearth. Henry Cunningham's share in the labours of this Commission and the preparation of the Report (in addition to his official duties) was perhaps the biggest and most permanent work which he did for India.

Mr. Stephen was made a K.C.S.I. in January 1877. He had met Lord Lytton just before the latter sailed for India. The acquaintance became a warm friendship on both sides; Sir James Stephen was a loyal champion of Lord Lytton's policy, and wrote to him by every mail; his brother-in-law continued to supply him with the latest information on Indian affairs.

"SIMLA.

"April 8, 1878.

"MY DEAR STEPHEN,—

"... Of course the great topic is the Cabul Expedition. We had a very interesting farewell dinner on Saturday. The Viceroy spoke excellently, with feeling, manliness, and dignity—as good as could

be wished. Sir Neville [Chamberlain] has quite won all hearts, but of course we all know what a jump in the dark it is, and the last accounts are not particularly encouraging as to our reception. The unknown factors are the promises which Russia may have made, the degree of hold she may have obtained over the Amir's mind, and the condition of that mind generally, for I fancy he is mad and drunk, and worse than ever since his son's death.

"My own idea is that when Russia sees we mean business she will decamp, bargaining that *neither* power shall meddle with Cabul, and swearing to Heaven it was all a mistake. . . . I am glad the position of things in Cabul has ended ; anything is better than the existing *status quo*.

"I fancied Lord Lytton was much pre-occupied and anxious at dinner. He got the telegram about a Russian railway via Tiflis and Teheran, and an English rumour of annexation of Cabul, just as we sat down. We are, of course, on the skirts of what may prove some of the biggest events we have ever had in India."

Lord Lytton, on his return, in a spirited maiden speech in Parliament, urged the importance of Kandahar remaining in our possession, which was the immediate practical decision to be taken at the moment. Lord Beaconsfield, then Leader of the Opposition, in his last great speech in the House of Lords (March 4, 1881), earnestly pleaded for its retention as a matter of Imperial policy. "My Lords," he said in a famous sentence, "the key of India is not Herat or Kandahar ; the key of India is London." The verdict of the election against

annexation had, however, been decisive, and it is one of the ironies of history that in those April days when the Empress of India and her people were watching with affectionate anxiety the ebb and flow of life in the sick-room of the dying statesman in London, the British Army was marching out of Kandahar.

“ LAHORE  
“ *April 11, 1878.*

“ MY DEAR STEPHEN,—

“ While I write our troops are, I suppose, marching up the Khyber and the doom of the Amir is pronounced. I am glad we are committed to his overthrow, for he was . . . thoroughly hostile and in a sulky, vindictive mood that made him a standing menace. If Lord Lytton can carry out his programme of smashing his army, deposing him, and putting up two or more subordinate friendly powers in his place, I think we shall be on a far safer basis. . . . I fear that the paying for the war out of Indian funds will be impracticable. This is such a world of paupers, though paupers in the English sense is too good a word, that I grudge every sixpence.

“ I am delighted with Caird, a bright, shrewd, kindly, merry Scotchman; knowing the world thoroughly—he will be a great addition and will make our report far more valuable in every way.

“ His Excellency showed me his long minute, and his letters to Lord Malmesbury and Sir J. Strachey. They seem to me so convincing as to leave little to be said—he certainly wields a first-rate pen.

“ I am sending you a collection of the [Famine] papers.

“ We go about the villages, see the people and

the revenue and police officials, and as far as possible learn all about them. The general result is very painful—dreadful, lifelong, hopeless, grinding poverty, constant periods of suffering and privation, frequent forms of death.

“Miss Nightingale’s tone and even hard sayings are not so far wrong, in my judgment, as the pæans that are sung over the triumphs of British rule and progress. The labouring classes are, I suspect, at present the worse for our rule—the landowners and traders better—but the look of the villages and villagers is often quite dreadful.”

This difficult work went on, but in the following June (1878) their home happiness was much increased by the birth of a son, “such a fine, vigorous little fellow,” christened Lawrence Henry. Lady Lytton was his godmother.

“SIMLA.

“August 26, 1878.

“MY DEAR STEPHEN,—

“I have been on the move for the last three weeks, in fact I was in bed only one night last week, and then only till 3 a.m. . . . I have been seeing relief works and poor-houses in the North-West Provinces. . . . Indian administration is a very loose, unprecise, ill-disciplined affair, with a great deal of idleness, a fair amount of insubordination, and unlimited stupidity to put things wrong as often as possible. . . . The Commissioners between them all have never made out *who* the people are who are dead of famine, and *why* they died and *how*, but content themselves with all sorts of

shuffling guesses. . . . In every part of India millions of a low class of labourer, agricultural and town, weavers, masons, tanners, etc., who in good times can earn about  $1\frac{1}{2}d.$  to  $2d.$  per diem, often paid in kind . . . always live close to starvation. . . . Last year the autumn crops absolutely failed, so that there was no common food such as these classes live on. . . .

“The Government of India were so hard up for money that they obliged Couper to collect his winter instalment of land revenue against his own protest that it would ruin the people. The Zemindars thus pressed starved the land, starved their labourers, employed as little as possible—so that everything went against the labouring classes. . . . The fact is, millions of people die every year of diseases preventible with care and money—cholera—fever—smallpox, etc. Famine is only one of these causes, but attracts attention by being intermittent. . . . I know you care about our Indian puzzles—as you say, the Commission is a monstrous big affair—if only there is anyone big enough to appreciate and do it.”

“UMBALA.

“November 28, 1878.

“MY DEAR STEPHEN,—

“We had a pleasant few days with Egerton, dined and lunched with the Viceroy and Mr. Caird, and I got an hour’s talk with him. Lord Lytton had not been very well, and was of course a good deal oppressed with business; but he was as bright and pleasant as possible, and discussed Indian administration and its reforms with great anima-

tion. He had been delighted with your letter, and the 'cur non potuistis' as the real explanation of many abandoned improvements. The difficulty in forming a general impression on administration matters is that each man knows or fancies that he knows how the machine would work best to suit his special idiosyncrasy and considers *that* the desirable improvement. An energetic man, who would be all over his district, if only he could get rid of routine work, tells you routine is the curse of the service; a man who likes sitting still and supervising, tells you that there is not half routine enough, and that the energetic man is a mischievous enthusiast, whose irregular benevolence plays the mischief with the Government. A third tells you that the great want is to get the British officer in contact with the people—a fourth that the British officer is a bore, and that the one thing the people want is to be let alone. After some weeks this sort of thing, all coming from officials of the greatest experience ('d—n your experienced official' is my commonest anathema just now), leaves you rather dizzy as to what the real state of the case is. Another difficulty is that the various parts of the country differ not merely in degree but essentially.

"Do tell me if you have any ideas on Famine. . . . Make your administration as good and cheap as you can; extend irrigation and agricultural improvement to its utmost length; encourage manufactures; simplify your Courts and have plenty of them—what can you do more?"

Sir James Fitzjames Stephen was made a Judge in January 1879.

*" June 9, 1879.*

" DEAREST MARY,—

" . . . I am not surprised at F. finding the work pretty hard—the fact is to be lawyer or judge your head ought to be full of law and nothing else, and your thoughts not roaming as far as British India and elsewhere.

" This is our little Lawrence's birthday, and we are celebrating it by a Festival of Babies with sundry juvenile forms of delectation which Emmy and her cousin Mrs. A. Lawrence are devising. Lady Lytton sent him a magnificent cow! with such a pretty letter this morning—she is such a sweet creature and always thinking of something kind to do. She is coming presently to the feast. . . . My little son is such a merry little fellow and laughs in a hearty, uncontrollable fashion that makes me hope he will be a cheerful man, at any rate. I am very hard at work and frightened at the near approach of the close of our labours. . . . Now I must be off to superintend tables, etc."

The British Mission to Afghanistan had started in high spirits after Lord Lytton's farewell dinner ; a treaty was signed in May 1879, giving us a new frontier. Sir Louis Cavagnari, who had chiefly conducted the negotiations, was sent as the first British Resident to Cabul. All seemed to be going well, when in September the tragic news burst upon Simla of the massacre of the gallant Cavagnari after a stout resistance and of every European in Cabul. This event made a deep impression in Calcutta, where Sir Louis had been a social favourite, and

Lord Lytton's reversal of Lord Lawrence's Afghan policy was severely criticised.

"SIMLA.  
"September 8, 1879.

"MY DEAREST MARY,—

"I know how fully and deeply you and F. will be sympathising in this crushing disaster. It reminds me of those terrible days after Lord Mayo's death—only then one had none of the anxiety for the future which this entails, and none of the party bitterness and attacks which it is sure to provoke. Of course all the Lyttonian policy will get drowned in a shower of invective, and one does not know where it will stop. . . . Poor Cavagnari and all the advisers must have been woefully misled—but judges as good as R. Egerton entertained no fears and thought all was right and safe. But now that the catastrophe has happened it seems obvious that it was in vain to hope that a few weeks' fighting had altered the Cabul nature, or to trust our envoy out of the reach of our cannon.

"Poor Cavagnari said to me before he went, 'Between ourselves, I wish I were going quietly to a Punjab Commissionership.'

"What a fulfilling of all Lord Lawrence's warnings. It will send up his reputation as a statesman—and of course all his party will be triumphant, the Duke of Argyll and Grant Duff. Well, come what will, I shall continue to believe Lord Lytton to be one of the cleverest fellows that ever set himself to solve the dreadful problems of our rule out here ; but too much led by individuals and heedless of the warnings of commonplace but useful advisers. Lumsden,



e.g., who knows more about Cabul than anyone in the world, having been imprisoned there all through the Mutiny, has been utterly out in the cold and never consulted. . . . However, my feelings on the whole subject are largely personal. I think Lord Lytton has had a tremendously difficult game to play, and has played with quite admirable power and nerve and judgment in many particulars. Whether he was wrong in this move one cannot judge—but it would not alter my view of his powers—and I shall always continue to think him a great deal of a genius. Lady Lytton is so sweet and calm and brave in her trouble. You can fancy what excitement there is here—all the soldiery off at a moment's notice ; the poor wives, who have been expecting their men back from Cabul after a year's absence, dreadfully disappointed. . . . I have given the Viceroy F.'s notes on my administration paper, but he has not had time to read them yet, and now when will he ? ”

Lord Lytton showed energy and courage in this crisis. He at once despatched Sir Frederick Roberts, and after the masterly campaign which made his great reputation, Roberts entered Cabul in October and deposed the treacherous Amir.

The war had been unpopular in England, and the murder of Cavagnari and the heavy cost of the avenging campaign contributed to the downfall of Lord Beaconsfield's Government in March 1880, and Lord Lytton resigned his office, to the infinite regret of Henry Cunningham. No one knew better than he did how sadly famine and war had inter-

ferred with the Viceroy's many schemes for social reform ; and that those he had carried through (such as the abolition of the tariffs between the several States, which established Free Trade all over India and immensely benefited native trades and industries) were little known or appreciated in England. The revenue was rising, and " but for the Afghan War, the three famines, the fall in the value of silver, which all occurred under Lord Lytton's rule, his Government was prepared to pay off debt and to remit taxation." He had hoped, as he wrote to Mr. Justice Stephen, to bequeath to India the supremacy of Central Asia and the revenues of a first-class power. Troubles were not yet over ; on his voyage home Lord Lytton was met at Gibraltar with " the miserable news from Kandahar " of General Burrowes's defeat at Maiwand and of his retreat. Sir Frederick Roberts speedily avenged this reverse, and occupied Kandahar.

Meanwhile, the arrival of the Marquis of Ripon at Simla meant not only a change of men but a complete change of policy.

Henry Cunningham served under seven Viceroys, and it was only during the years 1880 to 1884 that he felt himself quite out of sympathy with the head of the Government of India.

## CHAPTER X

### A GUEST'S IMPRESSIONS

MISS EMILY RITCHIE paid a month's visit to the Cunninghams from Behar, where she was spending eighteen months with her brother Gerald, then an Indian civilian of three years' standing ; permission has been kindly given to quote from her letters home.

“ CALCUTTA.

“ *March 4, 1881.*

“ I arrived at sunrise on Tuesday from Bankipore. Mr. Cunningham met me most kindly at the station and drove me off in a beautiful barouche across the grand bridge and along the quays and through the green expanses all about the Maidan to this charming house, furnished like a house in South Kensington. An immense verandah outside overlooks a pretty garden full of unknown flowers and creepers.

“ Both my hosts are kindness itself, and I am being provided at every moment with comforts—a sitting-room to myself, punkahs, iced sodas, drives, books, delightful conversation.

“ After 9 o'clock breakfast the Judge withdraws to the Law-Court, Mrs. Cunningham to her household duties and to be with her dear little boy Lawrence,

who reminds me of Velasquez's little boy-king; I to my boudoir, and we don't meet much till luncheon. After the reposing hour Mr. Cunningham pays me a visit, looking rather exhausted but with the most kindly fund of amusing conversation, so piquant and racy on passing occurrences. It is wonderful to find him in India always fresh and full of zest. Of course there are most interesting things to hear about from him in public courts. Then we go for a drive in the gloaming which is delightful, and then dinner. Several people have dined whom the C.'s thought in their kindly way might be useful for me to meet for G.'s sake. Much the most interesting man is Mr. Alfred Lyall, the Foreign Secretary, thin and magnetic with the keenest grey eyes and a fascinating mobile face. Mr. Cunningham speaks of him as a genius. He has the gift of making general conversation pointed in the most easy way and of responding interestingly to everyone's remarks, no matter who makes them.

" *March 8.*

" A great clearance has taken place in the atmosphere; a tremendous thunderstorm broke after lowering skies for several evenings, and it was a great experience to be out in it. We had been to the Botanical Gardens with Mr. Lyall in Sir Donald Stewart's yacht, and had tea there and strolled about in the pretty place in spite of the very heavy atmosphere and gloomy skies, thinking the storm would break in the distance, when just as we got back to the carriage from the river down came the rain in torrents and presently it began to hail. Hail in India makes one realise the plagues of Egypt. You never saw such monster white bullets

as the hailstones look falling about. The storm was altogether tremendous and at this moment the horses took fright and began to tear wildly off into space, the coachman at once lost all control, and there is no knowing what would have befallen us when we suddenly stopped with a crash. We held our breaths as to what was coming next and—found ourselves perfectly safe! One of the horses had knocked against a lamp-post and overturned it, and most fortunately fallen himself and got stunned so that he was quiet when he got up again. Then came a quarter of an hour during which Mr. Cunningham, a Lawrence cousin, and Mr. Lyall stood with carriage cushions on their heads (their hats having been whirled away) to protect them from the hailstones, trying to put the horses together again. After this I drove home with Mr. Cunningham, who had been imperturbably calm and reassuring through thunder, lightning, and hailstones, and went back to his spicy talk as if nothing had happened.

“Mr. Lyall had been as electric as the storm itself, exclaiming ‘Why, here’s hail—these hailstones kill people continually—this will do for the horses. There! they’re off! Heaven knows where we are going to. On to the box before we’re turned over,’ etc. By the next afternoon, when we went to a party at Belvedere, the adventure was a sensational topic and the most wonderful versions were going about!

“ *March 14.*

“My only reading here is the newspapers; the Cunninghams take in *The Times*, so I can get the speeches of three weeks ago, and not only the summaries in the *Pall Mall*. . . . Mr. Cunningham

is a Conservative, but ready to look all round ; she a Liberal, of course thoroughly well up in Lord Lawrence's Afghan views. They are delightfully open-minded and enjoy discussing everything. Indian finance is just now absorbing him, and it seems to me a triumph that anyone so happy as a novelist, so keen on social things, should be writing a book crammed full of statistics on so tough a subject—never, moreover, letting it appear that he is tackling anything very weighty.

“ We are going down at the end of the week to Barrackpore, where the Cunninghams have been lent the Viceroy's house during his absence. All the important Calcutta people except the Judges are about to remove to Simla till November, which is sad for those who are left.

“ BARRACKPORE.

“ *March 20.*

“ Last night when the rain had left off we strolled about in the enchanting grounds of this place—it seemed like England on one of her truly beautiful evenings after rain. We had tea under a mighty banyan-tree in which there were almost English-sounding birds singing. As a rule the absence of sweet birds' notes is a great loss in India ; the few there are are either discordant and shrieky or monotonous like a metronome's tick, so that it is a pleasure here besides the exquisite greenness and freshness of the trees and grass and the delicious smell of the earth and of various magnolia-like trees. It is delightful, not only for the Cunninghams to have this to come to all through the hot weather from Friday to Monday, but for their friends whom they gather in. They are the kindest of hosts, and

have a gift of finding out and making the most of the nicest people Calcutta can produce, combining them cleverly and of course entertaining them charmingly."

Mr. Cunningham would amuse his guests at Barrackpore with accounts of the "ex-King of Delhi, grim old State prisoner," who, when he first came to India, was to be seen on the river-shore opposite to these beautiful gardens. He was allowed to have all the strange accessories to his prison that he desired ; a harem like King Solomon's, a menagerie of wild beasts and serpents, huge flocks of pigeons, and an army of shabby hangers-on. These memories of a past that already seemed so remote must have interested Miss Ritchie greatly.

" *March 28.*

" This is my last day in Calcutta," she writes, " and I needn't say how sorry I am to be saying good-bye to the delightful Cunninghams. . . . It would be nice indeed if the result of my stay could be a moving-up for G. from Behar. Mr. Cunningham says that being on the spot and stating what you want is everything—and that *vice* present is much more profitable than any amount of virtue absent ! However, there is much to be said for staying in Behar, where winter-camping is worth all the society of India put together to *my mind*, a view not shared by these dear friends !

" The more I have seen of Mrs. Cunningham the more I have grown to love her sympathetic, kindly nature, and to admire her good judgment and her

fine, serious outlook, as well as her appreciation of his fun and wit. They are delightful *à deux*. They are sad at losing the friends who went off in Lord and Lady Ripon's train to Simla, and yesterday we said good-bye to the fascinating Barbara Lyall, whom I so much enjoyed getting to know at Barrackpore. We saw her in the steamer taking her to England.

"One of the last things I have done was to go over the High Court, such a beautiful, spacious, airy building with lofty, comfortable, airy rooms, very different from what they were in my father's days. It has been good to find how he is remembered, and also talked about by people who didn't know him, as a great lawyer. The present Advocate-General, a Mr. Paul, told me there was no such ability as his now in Bengal.

"Sir George Colley's death at Majuba Hill has caused great consternation here, where people knew him so well. Mrs. Cunningham, his intimate friend, describes him as most fascinating and a very noble personality. The whole thing has been tragic indeed."



## CHAPTER XI

### LAST YEARS IN INDIA

THE Report of the Famine Commission, which was a monumental work, came out in 1881, and it was a comfort to the indefatigable Secretary that it won the approval of the critic whose judgment he most valued.

" July 29, 1881.

" MY DEAR STEPHEN,—

" You have so often and so loyally blown my trumpet that it seemed to me quite natural to read your kind review in the *St. James's*—none the less do I thank you most heartily as well for the flattery, which with you I make no scruple in enjoying whenever I can get it, as for the trouble of reading what I believe no human art, except perhaps the divine William in a Midlothian oration, can render other than a grind.

" All you say is of course exactly what I liked to hear—and after all the discount to be allowed for brotherly partiality, I console myself with the reflection that it shows at any rate that I did not idle through my time with the Commission, an imputation which I especially resent. . . . Twice a week we have 'motion days,' and a wonderful variety of matters come up for disposal. As this sometimes

goes on from 11 to 4, one is pretty well done up at the end of the day."

In addition to the Famine Report, Henry Cunningham had made a serious study of the finances and resources of India. This information he embodied in a book published in 1881 entitled *British India and its Rulers*.

An interesting account is given of the "measureless improvement in law, and simplicity of procedure," greatly owing to Sir James Stephen's work; but it is confessed that the men whom the natives loved and followed were of a different type. "They were administrators like the late Lord Lawrence; often in camp, every day on horseback, and never inaccessible. They made roads, they put down gangs of robbers, and carried out a patriarchal sort of justice" that every man could understand.

The book never brought the author a shilling. He was more disappointed than surprised. He makes a character in one of his novels say to a young man returning home, "Let nothing tempt you to say a word about India—not one word. Polite people will ask you about it, but that is only to please you. Do not answer them. They cannot bear it"—and so, alas! it was proved by the publishers.

*To Lady Stephen*

"DARJEELING.

"November 12, 1881.

"DEAREST MARY,—

"You are by this time thoroughly settled in for the winter, and no doubt have already had your

first draught of November fog. We too have something of a winter here; the general effect is as if Darjeeling had been wrapped in clouds of cottonwool and put away for the winter. We are looking forward without regret to our departure and to being snug and warm in Calcutta. The fact is that when the Hills become black and misty, and the leaves are off the trees, and the rain comes down in cold torrents, there is a great deal to be said for perspiration and the plains.

"The Lieutenant-Governor and his little court of secretaries have gone, and the few survivors go creeping about in the gloom in a ghostly fashion that is quite depressing."

Henry Cunningham, when looking back at Miss Ritchie's visit to them, speaks of the difficulty they had in finding anyone they could ask to meet her.

"The new system has greatly altered the social status of the civilians—before they were sons of officers, directors, Scotch younger sons, City men, etc., but all with a family of some sort of respectability and connections. Now the great majority are the sons of tradesmen, crammed up for the examinations . . . we get a percentage of men so able that their being the sons of undertakers and staymakers does not matter, but most of them are disagreeable to deal with and their wives still worse.

"You will be hearing of our Viceroy's tour with the usual accompaniment of guns, trumpets, and tamashas."

Emily Cunningham paid a long-promised visit to her brother and sister-in-law in 1882, and renewed

her friendship with Mr. Egerton, whom they had known intimately at Lahore.

Emily was subsequently married to him at St. Mary Abbot, Kensington, on August 4, 1883, from Lady Stephen's house; he had become Sir Robert Egerton, K.C.S.I. He took his bride to Coed-y-glyn, Wrexham (the property of Mr. Yorke, of Erthig), where the Cunninghams, after their return home, used to pay them an annual visit. Sir Robert took an active share in the County business, but he was less at ease on a committee or on the Bench, than he had been as Governor of the Punjab, when he had been used to give unquestioned decisions on much larger issues.

Lady Egerton was universally beloved; she lived till 1916, having survived her husband by several years.

We return to the home at Calcutta, where little Lawrence was to have, as nearly as possible, an English Christmas—

“ December 25, 1883.

“ DEAREST MARY,—

“ . . . Emmy is deep in the anxieties of a Christmas-tree, at which Lawrence is to entertain a select circle of Calcutta babydom this afternoon. The tree has been a matter of difficulty—a Californian araucaria is the substitute for *Pinus deodara* of the Himalayas; but all is in good train and will, I hope, go off with éclat.

“ We have got Mr. Cordery here, who is up about the Nizam's affairs; he comes of age in March, and as Sir Salar Jung's successor has died just when his

death was most undesirable, the cauldron of intrigue at Hyderabad boils hotter, if possible, than usual. Cordery seems greatly interested to do the business really well and vigorously. He is always an excellent companion, and it is a great pleasure to have him here, especially as friends in this place are not quite a drug. Sir A. Lyall has been, and young Colvin—such a nice fellow.”

In the winter of 1884, Calcutta was intent on welcoming the Duke and Duchess of Connaught. There were levées, drawing-rooms, exhibitions, and “really beautiful illuminations.” “The Prince and Princess seemed a very nice young couple and played their parts as well as possible.” Mr. Justice Cunningham considered Lord Ripon’s administration an entire failure, and that he was then at “the climax of his unpopularity”; but he differed so entirely from the Viceroy in all his political ideals, that his disapprobation of his measures and of the Home Government that endorsed them was inevitable.

### *To Lady Stephen*

“December 2, 1884.

“I am just going off for the last time to meet a departing Viceroy, and next week shall perform the same function for a new one on arrival. Lord Ripon . . . bequeaths a much less tranquil country than he found to his successor. . . . We are, I believe, to be extremely gay here to show how loyal we really are, and I suppose Lord Dufferin will help us in that direction. Lady Dufferin is a distant

cousin of Emmy's and they say most charming. She will find everybody quite disposed to be charmed. Our friends the Gore Brownes have just come, which we are very glad of. . . . Now, dearest Mary, I must go off to worship this old gentleman who has so nearly ruined our Government."

" *January 27, 1885.*

" Lord Dufferin impresses us all most favourably in every way and is especially and markedly friendly to Emmy, so that our residence at Simla is likely to have whatever agreeables the sunshine of Government House can bestow upon it. . . . We have almost secured the Observatory, the house in which you were. We are going to have a sort of Lord Mayor's feast here, with Lord Dufferin as guest. I am to return thanks for the Judges, as Sir R. Garth dreads the fatigue and excitement; I am afraid he is beginning to feel rather old. . . . It was so kind of you to send me *Lord Malmesbury's Life*. . . . I suppose the era of fine old English Tory Lords, with gout and game and little domestic intrigues as to who is to be in the Ministry, etc., has passed for ever."

" *February 3, 1885.*

" I have had a week of speechifying, once at our new Health Society, and once at a sort of Lord Mayor's feast which the tradespeople give the Viceroy once a year. They were delighted at having something less solemn than is the fashion on such occasions.

" Lord Dufferin is sailing along very smoothly at present. Both of them have been to call on Emmy, which is a sort of heavenly honour you require to be in India to appreciate. . . .

"I regard *Jackanapes* as a work of great genius and am going to read it solemnly to Lawrence myself."

A guest, who became afterwards an intimate friend in England, Mrs. Goodrich, writes :

"In the early days—Lord Dufferin's time—I was most sincerely devoted to Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham, but a little awe-struck too, they were so 'superior' in the highest sense of the word—and I tried to lay aside my dirty shoes when I had the joy of meeting them.

"I think Sir Henry was then at the height of his renown, but so human too, and so amusing—very satirical—but he put sense into the rubbish we talked, and had such a marvellous power of sympathy and understanding that we left his company feeling that we really were quite clever. He loved every side of life, and was full of kindness to our frivolity, and made the wittiest answers to the most banal remark ; he judged most accurately other people's qualities. I loved them both with all my heart ; they stood by themselves alone for beauty of mind and character."

### *To Lady Stephen*

"CALCUTTA.

"May 12, 1885.

"We have had such an exciting time with continual expectation of war [with Burma], and then a rumour of Lord Dufferin's resignation—which, however, I always felt to be incredible. Emmy seems to like them both very much ; it is nice for

her to have such pleasant friends close at hand. . . . I am living in my old quarters, the Wilsons having kindly taken me in ; they are really charming people. . . . The Ritchies were here last night—what a dear little creature she is !—I thought her really quite bewitching—so very pretty and so delightfully simple and unconscious.

“ . . . Do your boys begin to get some briefs ? and are all the amusing poems in the *Saturday Review* and *St. James's Gazette* by them ? ”

“ July 21, 1885.

“ Lord Dufferin is evidently as good a Viceroy as could be wished, and there is really no breath of discontent apparent. The Russian scare is supposed to have a decidedly good effect in making loyalty more the fashion in India.”

“ August 6, 1885.

“ We are sorry to lose Sir D. Stewart here. He is a fine old fellow with a head on his shoulders and a great deal of independence of character.”

“ December 8, 1885.

“ Lord Dufferin is laid up with fever at Lucknow ; he has had a very successful tour. He does no work except on a grand scale—wars, annexations, restoration of fortresses to Rajahs, and other pageantic affairs—but is very clever and sensible.”

“ December 29, 1885.

“ Mrs. L. Tennyson is at Government House, her husband meanwhile on tour in East Bengal. I hope



she will come and pay us a visit ; she is such a sweet young creature."

" Lord Dufferin has taken to having bachelor dinners," he writes later from Simla, " that he may get to know all the officials. It is such a good plan. I am doing a good deal of planting on the Observatory Hill ; the trees have been disturbed by the building."

The years 1885 and 1886 had been very busy ones for Mr. Justice Cunningham ; his health was good, and he had only missed one day in six months in the Courts. His leisure had been devoted to another novel, *The Cœruleans* ; he put a great deal of his experience of Indian affairs into the clever and witty conversations, and was deeply absorbed in his characters, especially in his heroine Camilla, whom he delineated with infinite care and delicacy. He had interested Lord Dufferin in his ideas, and wrote to Lady Stephen (March 4, 1886) that the Viceroy " had gone through the book, suggesting alterations. He is a capital critic."

The book was published by Macmillan in the following spring, and he had the pleasure on his return to England of finding it in the hands of his friends, who were ready to discuss it with him, generally with approval.

Queen Victoria's first Jubilee year brought the Cunninghams the gift of a daughter, to be their joy and plaything in infancy, and their good angel in the autumn and winter of their lives. Her father writes (Calcutta, February 1, 1887) : " The baby is

considered by judges of such things to promise to be charming—her blue eyes excite special admiration; her name, I believe, is to be Mary Hermione."

Lawrence, in all the majesty of his eight years' seniority, writes to "Aunt Mary" of his sister, two days' old, the latest addition to his precious possessions—of "a canary, two white Java sparrows, two kites' nests and a crow's. I have a rattle for her, she has dark blue eyes and very little hair. I like my baby sister very much."

Calcutta is busy preparing for Jubilee celebrations, the feeding of 30,000 school-children, and "enormous illuminations." The Judge is chiefly concerned with the two days' public holiday, which he is beginning to regard "as chief of blessings."

The christening took place in Bishop Heber's cathedral; Lord and Lady Dufferin were both sponsors and came in state; the father remarked that the baby would probably never again be the central figure of so grand a ceremonial!

Only a few Englishmen have taken such a wide interest in Indian affairs. Mr. Justice Cunningham, as we have seen, entered into all the problems, political, financial, legal, and social, with which the Government had to deal. He had analysed Anglo-Indian society very acutely in his novels, and last but not least, our relations with the native populations, and especially with the Hindus, stirred his kind heart and appealed to his imagination. He

always wrote of them with understanding sympathy—

“the white-robed, dark-skinned, silent people who are so hard for us to understand—silent though courteous and often voluble, they are not communicative about their inner lives and feelings. They have learnt reticence in a severe school. Sad, gentle, resigned, brave in endurance, simple in tastes and needs, versed in the subtleties by which oppression may be alleviated, quick in intellect, nimble in argument, indefatigable in industry, the Bengalee is at last confronted with the stalwart Englishman, who, if he does not understand him and holds him too cheaply, at any rate does not oppress him. But the Englishman must be dull indeed who does not appreciate the Bengalee's grace, his courtesy and intellectual prowess.”

The Government aimed at complete religious tolerance, and did not attempt to disturb any illusions ; but so acute an observer as Mr. Cunningham felt the difficulty of giving the Hindu any kind of education which should not upset “the tissue of absurdities prescribed by his creed in daily life, and with it his reverence for any ideals that might underlay them.” The manufacture of idols went on briskly, and no scruple was felt about selling them to the unbeliever ; when Sir James Stephen bought some of the images at Benares, the case arrived in Calcutta labelled—“Gods, with care.” Mr. Cunningham regretted that—

“the trend of events tended to break up the most

sacred Hindu institution, the United Family ; in most households there would be found a little nucleus of conservative sentiment, in a grandmother or a mother, which shuddered at the decay of faith and saw the world tumbling about its ears. But there is a great if vague religion in the air."

"The collision of superstition and civilisation" in the High Courts gave rise to some amazing trials. English barristers would be engaged to defend the rights of some remote temple, and when the judge had given his earnest attention to the unravelling of a tangled story, it seemed that "the only interest involved was that of the priests who feared to lose some exorbitant but immemorial fees." He had a kind word even for the Baboo, the middle-class Hindu in Bengal who looks to make a living by his education, and who was the butt of the comic papers.

"He is the clerk, the copyist, the subtle and voluble pleader in the Courts, laborious, precise, indefatigable, he speaks English extraordinarily well ; but as he is brought up on Burke and Macaulay he is grandiloquent when he means to be impressive. He will ask if rudely jostled on the pavement : 'Is this your boasted British jurisprudence ?' He will speak of a country as 'curry-combed with conspiracies,' or paraphrase 'animal spirits' by 'brutal souls.' He is the essence of politeness. Here is a pathetic burst of gratitude : 'You have been very good to me ; may God Almighty give you tit for tat.'

"Be his comic touches what they may, the Baboo has a thousand merits, and no ruler of India from

Akbar downwards has been able to dispense with his services.”

Such varied interests had made his stay in India very congenial, but gradually the blessed prospect of home-coming filled a larger and larger space in his thoughts and his correspondence.

## CHAPTER XII

### AT HOME AGAIN

AT last the work of twenty-one years could be honourably relinquished, and the summer of 1887 saw Mr. Justice Cunningham with his wife and children in England once more. In spite of the sense of exile which pressed upon him at times, he always maintained that with plenty of hard work and reasonable precautions an English official might have a happy and interesting time in India, and he quoted "the Irishman's" joke against those who were always complaining: "They eats and they drinks, and they eats and they dies—then they writes home and says it is the climate."

Sir Arthur Chapman, who knew him intimately at Calcutta and shared a house with him when Mrs. Cunningham was at Simla, writes of his work in India :

"I have never known anyone during my long life with whom it was a greater privilege to be associated than with Mr. Cunningham. It was impossible not to love him, for he was the embodiment of unselfishness and consideration for others. I cannot remember a single occasion during the many years in which

I was associated with him when he lost his temper or said an unkind thing about other people. He was the most delightful companion, owing to his knowledge of literature and his love of books, his keen sense of humour, and the deep interest he took in public questions. His memory used to astonish me ; he could repeat without a mistake the lines he had learnt for repetitions at Harrow. His career as a Judge of the High Court was not conspicuous in any way, though he was held to be a sound lawyer.

"The work of a Judge precludes him from taking a prominent part in the administration of a country ; . . . the public know nothing about him beyond the fact that he is a Judge. There is therefore nothing very striking to say about his public work in India.

"As a matter of fact, he took the greatest interest in public affairs, and did influence them by his articles in the press, but no one knew this except his intimate friends like myself. He had great literary gifts and should really have had a literary career. He and Mrs. Cunningham secured for themselves, as they deserved to do, the love and devotion of innumerable friends ; they both had an unequalled power of attracting people to them—they both loved entertaining their friends, and they both possessed the ability to draw out from others the very best that was in them."

This sympathy was heartily shown during their farewell visits in Calcutta. The Viceroy wrote (March 13, 1887) :

"MY DEAR MRS. CUNNINGHAM,—

"It is too horrid to think of your going away ; but if India has brought me no other benefit,



SIR HENRY STEWART CUNNINGHAM 1916

*Elliott & Fry*



it has at least given me your friendship, which is indeed a very precious possession.

"Yours sincerely,  
"DUFFERIN."

The family rejoicings at the other end of the long voyage were very welcome; there were numerous nephews and nieces on both sides to be introduced to them, and their own children to be admired. The veteran Lord Lawrence had died during their absence, but Lady Lawrence lived, to welcome her daughter home.

In January 1889 Mr. Cunningham was made a Knight Commander of the Indian Empire, and this was the occasion of a number of kind letters. Sir John Strachey, now settled in London, was glad that the Government recognised the many good services he had rendered to India; Lord Dufferin sent his congratulations from the British Embassy at Rome. Dr. Montagu Butler, Lord Bowen, and a number of old friends rejoice in the "melodious change in their names." Mr. Justice Mathew writes: "Many happy years to you and Lady Cunningham. I am glad that you do not return to Dustypore, but that you will abide for the future in the land of Wheat and Tares!"

Sir Alfred Lyall, in congratulating Sir Henry on his "accession to knighthood," hopes that Lady Cunningham is also pleased; "it is a much more euphonious designation than 'Mrs.' You know that Lord Tennyson said he accepted his peerage in order

that his ear might be spared the sibilants of *Missis Tennyson*."

Sir Henry Cunningham was soon hard at work on social problems. At the Congress of the Sanitary Institute at Worcester in 1889, he delivered an earnest address on the Public Health in India, which was printed in the *Transactions*, and at every opportunity he pleaded the cause of the slum-dwellers in London, "who are too ignorant, too feeble, and too resourceless to put in force the laws passed for their protection . . . a population little able to assert its rights either against landlords or the official custodians of the public health."

He had always taken an interest in finance, and took up regular work as a Director of the Chartered Bank of India, and the American Investment Trust. He was also one of the original Directors, and for many years Chairman, of the South Behar Railway Company, to which he devoted "much ability and unsparing work." Few of the friends who valued his charming hospitality and enjoyed his novels knew how much solid work lay behind his brilliant social accomplishments.

After some years of an interesting and very full life in London, Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham decided to settle in Brighton, partly for the health of their little daughter, who was much benefited by the change of climate.

Mrs. Gilbertson, whose intimate friendship and constant visits meant so much to Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham, both at Brighton and later on in

London, has contributed some recollections of those days.

"In the winter of 1899-1900 my father (Sir Brydges Henniker) became a great invalid, which decided us to give up London and live at Brighton. It seemed a great wrench breaking off from all interests and friends, but I can now look back upon seven wonderfully happy years there—the happiness coming almost entirely from our dear friends Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham. They had been living at Brighton about a year when we came and had already made a delightful circle there, into which they at once welcomed us. Never had two people more of the 'talent for friendship' than they had. Anyone of interest coming to Brighton for a few days seemed to find their way to the house in Palmeira Square, sure of a delightful welcome. Mr. Lecky, the historian, Sir J. Knowles, of the *Nineteenth Century*, Mr. Augustine Birrell, Sir Mountstuart Grant Duff, Mr. and Mrs. Edward Trotter, Mademoiselle de Peyronnet, Mr. Cross, and Mr. Wilkins are just a few of the 'intimates' I remember meeting. Among other friends were Sir Lewis and Lady McIver, and Mrs. Montefiore in her bright and intellectual old age.

"Sir Henry took a deep interest in all the local social movements at Brighton, which were so much associated with the names of Mr. A. O. Jennings and the Rev. Dr. R. J. Campbell.

"Their Sunday afternoons," as Mrs. Gilbertson recalls them, "became an institution wherever Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham might be; when the Brighton days ended I looked forward to the same delightful gatherings in Eaton Place, where

they rejoiced that their house should be a meeting-place for mutual friends."

Long years in India had only intensified Sir Henry's appreciation of English country life. An old English home, with its park and woods and its pleasant lawn and gardens, was the setting of his next novel, published in 1890—*The Heriots*. He pictured a family settled for generations in their old home of Huntsham, and perfectly devoted to it.

The story centres round Lady Heriot in her capable and vigorous old age. Her eldest son, Sir Adrian, is a typical Victorian country gentleman, a magistrate and a sportsman, making a brave show to the world, but much harassed by debts and mortgages, the claims of a burdened estate, and the prospects of his only son Jack, a delightful product of Eton and Christ Church, with no more worldly wisdom than his father. Old Lady Heriot was very fond of Sir Adrian, but there were times when he and his gentle wife had the effect upon her of a dull sermon, and then she would turn with relief to her second son, Valentine, a successful City man, who with his fashionable wife had an agreeable air of prosperity and independence.

The younger heroine of the story is most delicately drawn. The daughter of a neighbouring clergyman, a college friend of Sir Adrian's, Olivia has grown up with Jack Heriot and they are devoted to each other, but any thought of marriage between them is deemed impossible by the family. Lady Heriot,

who has fallen in love with Olivia after her annual visit to Huntsham, invites her to stay with her in London. The friendship between the old woman and the young girl is beautifully given, and their companionship is only brought to an end by the failing health of Olivia's father, which urgently calls for her return.

As years go on, Lady Heriot falls more and more under the power of Mrs. Valentine; she alienates her by imperceptible degrees from Sir Adrian, who is constantly getting poorer, and finally the old lady is induced to sign a codicil to her will, leaving the money which was to have saved Huntsham to Valentine and his little son Antinous, who is idolised by his mother and grandmother. Mrs. Valentine with her accession of wealth patronises the orphaned Olivia, enjoys a reflected glory from her protégée's great popularity, and is full of ambition that she should make a wealthy marriage.

Olivia's London season is brilliantly described with its fatiguing and unsatisfying pleasures. She yields at last to the ardent courtship of a rich young M.P. whose intellectual power attracts her, and his personal kindness. Once engaged, de Renzi overwhelms her with costly gifts and with everything he can devise for her amusement. His pride in her beauty makes him want her to shine in the smart set that is most uncongenial to her, but he has little leisure for real intimacy and leaves her heart lonely and cold, with ever-increasing doubts and scruples.

The climax comes with a fashionable river-party

on a Sunday, when an absurdly luxurious picnic is followed by a thunderstorm ; the ladies rush for shelter into a little church, and Olivia, taking refuge in the solitude of a high pew from the gossip and scandal of the chatter around her, finds her true self again and breaks off her engagement.

The interest of the plot is sustained to the end. The child for whom Mrs. Valentine had schemed and cheated dies of diphtheria, the mystery of the will is cleared up, the brothers are reconciled, Olivia and Jack are married, and Huntsham is saved.

Some account of a story published more than thirty years ago seemed necessary to explain the correspondence it called forth.

Mr. Augustine Birrell writes, after reading the proof-sheets of *The Heriots* with Mrs. Birrell :

“ Between the two of us we hope to concoct a review which will make you blush ; whether you will consider it Fame, I forbear to ask.

“ We both like the story very much indeed. It is quite delightful. Olivia is charming—serious and good and pure and yet lively and learned. The codicil business too seems well arranged and probable. One only criticism is why *Antinous* ? Still, as he died it don’t matter. Had he been called Anthony he might have lived, and where would you have been then ?

“ May you run into numerous editions and end gloriously in a yellow back.”

Congratulations poured out from friends old and new ; it was not only the holiday novel-readers

who expressed their enjoyment, the book was giving relief to overworked judges and harassed Ministers, and to all sorts of good and wise people.

Mr. Justice Mathew writes from Folkestone after the fatigues of the Northern Circuit :

" *The Heriots* have been a great comfort to me ; the book carries me back to the times of the immortal *Wheat and Tares*. . . . The execution of the will and the Sunday party on the river are masterly. Such delightful reading is not easy writing—but you must write us more."

Mrs. Goschen writes on April 30 from 69, Portland Place :

" MY DEAR SIR HENRY,—

" Very many thanks for *The Heriots* received yesterday. The Chancellor is at this moment reposing on the sofa reading the first volume, which I hope will take the Budget out of his head for an hour or two. I hope to enjoy the three volumes at Seacox, where we go on Tuesday for our short holiday. . . .

" Yours sincerely,

" LUCY GOSCHEN."

Mrs. Henry Gladstone, daughter of his friend Lord Rendel, wants to see him to tell him " of the pretty things Mr. Gladstone says about *The Heriots*, to which Charles Bowen adds : " I hear the G.O.M. is very excited over *The Heriots*. Don't be puffed up, however ; you only share his thoughts with Homer and the Book of Genesis."

The old statesman wrote himself to the publishers :

" 10, ST. JAMES'S SQUARE.  
" April 17, 1890.

" DEAR SIRs,—

" I thank you very much for sending me *The Heriots*. An indisposition which confined me for some days brought me compensation in the shape of an opportunity for reading it. It seemed to me an excellent example of the social novel with great felicity of style, character, and plot, and with a high and worthy aim.

" Yours faithfully,

" W. E. GLADSTONE.

" Messrs. Macmillan."

A party of literary friends were staying at Freshwater that Easter of 1890, in order to be near the aged Lord Tennyson. A letter of Lady Tennyson's in his *Life* mentions this gathering; the walks that he took with Mr. Arthur Coleridge, and the large parties that used to come up to tea. No author could have wished his work discussed in a more congenial atmosphere—Mr. Coleridge writes to Sir Henry :

" In this enchanted Isle we live like early Christians and use each other's goods and chattels. If you see me wearing the Bard's hat, don't faint. The old fellow accepts me as his daily walking-stick; I spend nearer three than two hours with him daily. I am an inferior Bennet Langton or Topham Beauclere to his Dr. Johnson, as play-actors say.



"This morning we discussed your novel—which seems to have pleased him—but he reads such a lot of novels that they get jumbled in his memory. I am delighted with your brilliancy and inventiveness. I wish I saw more of you, but as I grow old I feel my ineffable stupidity and unfitness for distinguished people. I suit the Bard, for he can hear my voice and I am not given to combativeness and argument."

Another member of the party, Lady Ritchie, was a lifelong friend, and Sir Henry's admiration for her own graceful literary style gave special value to her approval.

"I have so enjoyed your book," Lady Ritchie writes; "we have handed it about the Island, and it is quite battered. All of us have been grateful to you for the additional sunshine you have given us . . . your quaint fancies and charming descriptions. I think we agree in sympathising most of all with the charming and most touching church scene. . . . It is a real *Easter* book with so much grace and freshness and heart, and I can't tell you how much I have liked it. . . . We are all books here—and every afternoon a whole shelf-full of us goes up to tea with the Idylls. Plato in one very small volume has arrived, and they have kindly asked me up to dine to-night to meet him."

*The Heriots* had a large circulation, and was translated into French and well reviewed in Paris.

The novel was no sooner launched than Sir Henry was busy with a Life of Earl Canning for the "Rulers

of India " Series, which appeared in the winter of 1891. It was a masterly summary of the story of the Mutiny, as well as a tribute to the wise judgment and prompt decision of "Clemency Canning," whose actions at the time were so much misunderstood. The motto on the title-page, "Ne cede malis," was the key of the book.

In 1894 Lord Bowen died. The friendship, begun as undergraduates at Oxford, had been kept up through long partings, and he greatly enjoyed his friend's writings. Lord Bowen's family desired that some record of this beautiful life should be undertaken by Sir Henry. He found the task a difficult one, owing to the very intimacy of their friendship. But the "Sketch," which was privately printed, became at once so popular that it was slightly enlarged and published by Murray.

A letter from Lord Dufferin may be quoted as showing the wide appreciation with which the Memoir was received.

" BRITISH EMBASSY, PARIS.

" May 15, 1896.

" MY DEAR CUNNINGHAM,—

" I duly received your charming book about Bowen and I have already read a good many pages. You have had a delightful subject to deal with, and nothing could be tenderer, more delicate, and more tactful than the way you have treated it, and the get-up of the book is superb.

" I did not know Bowen very well, but I was fortunate enough to get him to come to breakfast

with us one day a year or so ago. He told me he had had several attacks of influenza, but he did not strike one as looking ill, and I little thought how soon we were to lose him. . . .

" With my kindest and most affectionate regards to Lady Cunningham,

" Believe me, yours very sincerely,

" DUFFERIN AND AVA."

A third biography was planned, but a failure of health prevented its completion. Sir Henry had a great affection for Sir Donald Stewart and a personal knowledge of his Indian career. To write his Life was a task very congenial to him ; he had already mapped it out in chapters, and relinquished it to other hands with real regret.

In another novel, *Sibylla* (published in 1894), Sir Henry had given a different aspect of English society. He had not been personally attracted by a political life, but he describes it well from the outside. He gives us the tumult of a contested election ; the hopes and disappointments of the aspirants ; and the fascination of the House of Commons for its members. *Sibylla* is the intellectual and charming wife of an M.P. ; the happiness of their married life is nearly wrecked by an unpleasant family secret that her husband keeps from her, wishing to spare her ; but the mystery is satisfactorily cleared up at last, and it is a lively and interesting story.

During these years Lawrence had been educated at Wixenford and at Winchester. On a visit to Claydon

with his parents he left a pleasant impression of an energetic schoolboy with outdoor tastes who preferred the present of a knife to that of a book. He was allowed to go out to Canada and spent some time in learning mining and assaying. Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham paid him a visit in 1896, and greatly enjoyed their journey over the Rocky Mountains. Mr. Cecil Spring-Rice met them at Montreal, and speeded them on their journey.

In 1904 Lawrence Cunningham went on a voyage to New Zealand in order to recover from an operation, and during his stay there he made the acquaintance of Mr. Charles Cooper and his family. They were living at "Armada," one of the oldest houses in the Colony, and the town of Auckland had been gradually built round the house and park.

In 1905 Lawrence married Alice Maude, Mr. Cooper's youngest daughter, and after a short honeymoon in New Zealand they sailed for San Francisco, which was for a time to be their home. In 1906 Mrs. Cunningham returned to her mother's house for the birth of her first child. Then, without any warning the terrible earthquake laid San Francisco in ruins; posts and telegrams could not be got through, and for a time Lawrence's wife in New Zealand and his parents in England were in complete ignorance of his fate. Their anxiety was relieved at last by his own letters relating his wonderful escape.

"The earthquake started," he wrote, "with a terrible shock, which threw me out of bed, and the door jammed, but I managed to break it open and get out in my coat and vest and trousers. The house on the other side of the road was already down, and everyone rushed up the street as hard as they could, some with nothing but a sheet on. . . . Some houses were blown into the air. The sewers were blown up, so that no water could be got. Then the fire broke out, and of course nothing could be done except along the waterfront. All the large buildings caught fire, some eighteen and twenty stories high. Every bank has been burnt down, but it is generally thought that they will pay in full as the bullion and plate are intact.

"Martial law was proclaimed and soldiers stationed to prevent loot; . . . so far some twenty-five people have been shot.

"It has been a most terrible disaster. The shock was felt all down the coast and across the bay. People ran for their lives with what property they could get from the city. I went over the bay to Oakland and have been there since. We get plenty to eat, but what is wanted is blankets and covering. The cold is very bad at night. Last night 800 slept in the same school-house, and there are hundreds and thousands camped out in tents sleeping on the bare ground."

In the late summer of 1906 Mrs. Cunningham brought her infant son Lawrence to England to rejoin her husband, and she was warmly welcomed by Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham, who went to

the Albert Docks to meet her. Their son's marriage and the birth of their grandson had been a great pleasure to them, and they were longing to know their daughter-in-law, with whom they had already established a regular correspondence on most affectionate terms. It was at their Brighton home, 5, Percival Terrace, that their second grandson, Hal, was born, on December 15, 1907. This was Herbert Spencer's old house, next door to Sir James and Lady Knowles of the *Nineteenth Century*, who were valued friends. Their principal home at this time was at 83, Eaton Place, where they greatly enjoyed entertaining a congenial circle—Lady Sligo and her sister Mademoiselle de Peyronnet, Lady Ritchie, Mrs. Gilbertson, Mrs. G. V. C. Napier, Sir George and Lady Prothero, Miss Chenevix Trench, Mrs. F. W. H. Myers, Miss Ritchie, Miss Edith Sichel, Sir Archibald Geikie, Mr. Douglas Freshfield, Mrs. Humphry Ward, and Lady Low. There were old Indian friends also, such as the Dowager Lady Lytton, Lord and Lady Dufferin, Sir Arthur Chapman, Lord and Lady MacDonnell, Sir Courtenay and Lady Ilbert, Sir Alfred Lyall, Sir John and Sir Richard Strachey.

In 1905 Sir Henry's eyesight began to fail—the greatest trial that could befall so voracious a reader ; but he faced it uncomplainingly and accepted graciously the eyes of others. Lady Cunningham, who had tended and read so much to her father, Lord Lawrence, in his later years, when he too had to face the same deprivation, was a delightful

reader, and she used daily to read aloud to Sir Henry, as did his daughter and his secretary.

He was so keen and eager that people found it difficult to realise how little he could see. He learnt a great deal of poetry by heart, and his interest in public affairs, in literature, and in science, never faltered. He was able to continue his work in the City, in spite of his blindness.

Miss Mabel Blunt, daughter of an old friend of Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham's, Bishop Blunt, who read to him from time to time, was amazed at the range of his interests and the strength of his memory.

"We read very thoroughly the daily papers, including the Money Market, but he turned with some relief to other subjects. The first biography I read to him, during some beautiful days in Ashdown Forest, was that of John Bright, with whom he was much in sympathy, and he and Lady Cunningham revived many memories of old days in talking it over. He cared for everything that bore on the relief of the suffering, and the improvement of social conditions: Lady Henry Somerset's work; the Report of the latest Commission on the Liquor Traffic; and Dr. Scharlieb's articles on Infant Mortality. He was a born reformer. His mind was a perfect storehouse of poems. I recall a hot summer's evening in the country when he recited Milton's Odes, Shelley's 'Skylark,' Wotton's 'Character of a Happy Life,' Marvel's 'Song of the Emigrants,' Tennyson's 'Lotus-eaters,' and others, his face wearing a look of deep content and his voice unimpassioned and calm."

Sir Henry kept up his writing as long as possible, as the following letters will show :

*From H. S. C.*

" NORTH BERWICK.

" *September 7, 1905*

" MY DEAR BUTLER,—

" I thought it very nice of you to remember me in the scenes of our wanderings forty-nine years ago. . . . What good times we had then and what a possession enjoyments of that sort are for after-life ! You will have found Zermatt and the Riffelberg very different places from what we found them—and Monte Rosa, I suppose, scaled by a funicular railway. However, I must confess when I was last in Switzerland I blessed the funiculars for enabling me to scale several heights which otherwise I could only have admired at a distance.

" I am truly rejoiced, my dear friend, to know that you are well and strong enough to enjoy an expedition which, however carefully safeguarded, must make somewhat of a call upon one's powers. My last ride, a year or two ago, down from Rosenlauri, left me as thoroughly *accablé* as I was after our Monte Rosa achievement. Here we live a tranquil life, in a community absolutely absorbed in golf—fortunately my daughter is devoted to it, or we should feel almost estranged from our species, as I am not strong enough to venture to be initiated into its mysteries. To-day the excitement is intenser than ever owing to the presence of the Prime Minister [Mr. Balfour], whom I have just seen on the links followed by an admiring group.

" I was so glad to get a sight of you and



Mrs. Butler on Speech Day [at Harrow], and to witness the rising brightness of the *lucida sidera*, destined, I trust, to many more and greater triumphs."

In the winter of 1907 Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham and their daughter went to the Riviera and spent some enjoyable months there, staying part of the time with Lord and Lady Rendel at their lovely Villa Torrents at Cannes, and also at Valescure.

*From H. S. C.*

"HÔTEL DE PRINCE DE GALLES, CANNES.

"February 24, 1907.

"MY DEAR LADY DAVEY,—

"The tragic death-roll of old friends which has made the last fortnight a sort of nightmare to me, winds up to-day with the news that your husband is no longer among us. I need not, I am sure, tell you how that has saddened us, and how sincerely I am sympathising with you and your children in all the sorrow that such a loss must cost you. And to what far-distant periods of our lives does it not take us back—to the time when we were all students together, and beginning the race in which he left us all so far behind. What an interesting and distinguished career he has had since then, and how constantly and closely you have shared his fortunes! Such great and well-deserved honours, such solid and unquestioned success are indeed achievements in which we who watched his career from first to last with a friendly eye and lively sympathy could not but feel a deep interest and satisfaction. The chances of politics

decreed that he should not be a Lord Chancellor, which one regretted; but I do not know that his professional reputation could have stood higher, even had that been added to his list of honours. We hardly dared to hope in those early days that his health would bear the strain of a long and arduous professional career. What times of anxiety you have had, and how much your loving care has done to steer that somewhat fragile bark through shoals and tempests!

"How deadly this winter has been to the old and infirm! Since we came here I have lost six old friends, and now almost dread to open *The Times* for fear of what new loss it will announce. It has cast a terrible gloom over our stay here, despite the sunshine and the thousand charms of this lovely coast. We are close neighbours of another Oxford contemporary, Lord Rendel, who has kindly put his lovely garden—a veritable paradise—at our disposal. He is a good deal of an invalid, too much to be able to enjoy the beauties amid which he lives. . . .

"You must excuse a badly written letter; I am too blind to read a word, but I could not leave this letter to the hand of another."

*From H. S. C.*

"BRIGHTON.  
"October 10, 1907.

"MY DEAR BUTLER,—

"Your kind letter and the sympathy and friendship it breathed gave me the greatest pleasure. . . . I met Arthur Coleridge yesterday. . . . I had seen a good deal of his delightful Mary of late, as she used to be good enough to come and read

to me in the summer or better still to talk to me. I thought her most gifted, sweet, bright, accomplished, and instinct with kindness, and so very amusing. I confess that some of her writing soared at somewhat too lofty an atmosphere for my humbler and grosser capacities, but I think that the younger generation convey their thoughts in language too subtle for easy apprehension. But what a dreadful crushing blow for her poor father, and what flea-bites do such troubles as mine seem in comparison, though I confess my inability to read a word of anything or see the human face divine does sometimes make me doubt the expediency of out-running the three score years and ten and of dying by inches. I hope you are keeping well and strong and able to make many speeches and as good ones as ever. . . .

“Ever your affectionate

“H. S. CUNNINGHAM.”

Sir Henry was referring to the death of the poet, Mary Coleridge, after a few days of severe suffering.

A third grandson, Terence, was born in December 1908; and in the following year, 1909, Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham had the terrible sorrow of losing their only son. Lawrence Cunningham went to Montreal on business and was taken ill there. His wife immediately set sail to join him, but while she was still on the sea the tragic news was cabled home that he had contracted typhoid fever in the epidemic then raging in Montreal, and he died before wife or parents could reach him. He had been received some years previously into the Roman Catholic Church.

The thought of his young widow and three little sons helped Sir Henry and Lady Cunningham in that dark hour. Their daughter-in-law returned to them and for a time lived with them. In the spring of 1910 Mrs. Cunningham went to New Zealand, taking her eldest and youngest children with her and leaving her second son to comfort his grandmother, who was passionately devoted to her grandsons, and to whom the absence of her daughter-in-law was a great sorrow.

Sir Henry paid the penalty of a protracted life, in surviving those of his own generation. Mary, Lady Stephen, died in November 1912, and Emily, Lady Egerton, in December 1916. Her death was a poignant sorrow ; she had been in his early manhood her brother's most intimate companion, and in the days of her widowhood she leant more than ever on his love. They had written a daily letter to each other whenever parted, and this was continued to the last.

Miss Katherine Stephen has contributed her recollections of the happy relations that existed between the brother and sisters :

“ My uncle, Henry Cunningham, and his own two sisters, Lady Egerton and my mother, Lady Stephen, were the closest possible friends through their whole lives. As one of them said ; ‘ It most likely seemed very unimportant at one time that there should be three little children at the end of the family, but afterwards the elder ones said that we three had kept all the family together.’ They were certainly

most careful to keep up communication with their elder brothers and sisters; they were particularly attentive, too, to their nephews and nieces, and succeeded in establishing real friendships with many of them. They never ceased to take acute pleasure in each other's company, Henry's sisters being exceedingly entertained by his witty talk and jokes, and he turning to them continually for sympathy and help in all the troubles of his life. He was, naturally, more dependent on them in this way before his marriage. After that event the intercourse of the three continued unbroken, and my aunt joined the circle, as my father had already joined it, without making it in any way less closely united.

" They all had in common a taste for reading, and my mother provided my uncle with a constant supply of books during his life in India, making a point of sending him anything that specially attracted her or that was being read and talked of in England. My mother was an invalid for the last few years of her life, and there was nothing more cheering to her than the visits my uncle continually paid her. His nieces kept a novel always on hand to be read aloud during his visits, and he had a wonderfully clear memory of the exact point where the reading had stopped on the last occasion. These works were generally old favourites, such as Miss Thackeray's stories, Hardy's, Mrs. de la Pasture's. Sometimes my mother and he would recite to each other the poems which both, when over eighty, amused themselves with learning by heart, and my uncle's rendering of some of Browning's shorter poems was something to be remembered. My uncle survived both his sisters, and was the last outside visitor seen

by each of them. He could never bring himself to stay again at the house which had been my mother's home. But we all saw him at every opportunity at his house in London, and at the houses where he stayed in the country, and as long as he lived we felt ourselves still in the much-prized company of the generation to which he belonged."

When the war broke out in 1914, and private joys and sorrows were merged in public anxieties, Miss Blunt recalls Sir Henry's absorbed interest: "He followed carefully the movements of the troops, until he had mastered the features of the country and had traced, in spite of his dim sight, the courses of the rivers on the map, and realised every act of the great drama."

## CHAPTER XIII

### THE LAST CHAPTER

IN June 1918 Lady Cunningham's health gave cause for grave anxiety, and at the end of the month an operation was decided upon. At first good hope was entertained of a complete recovery, but soon her strength began to fail and pneumonia set in, and on July 8, surrounded by those she loved and who loved her so dearly, with her hand in her husband's she passed away. The many letters and expressions of grief which Sir Henry and his daughter received told of the love and reverence in which Lady Cunningham was held. Lady Low wrote to him :

" You ask me, dear Sir Henry, of the impression made on me by the beloved and saintly friend who has so lately passed into the Unseen World, where in the Radiance of the Light Eternal she dwells among her peers. I think the characteristics which most strongly impressed me from the first day of our acquaintance and throughout its happy years until the end were, first, a great natural dignity both of mind and manner, and, secondly, an enlightening and basal tenderness. It would have been impossible to take a liberty with that gentle stateliness, and it

would have been impossible to gauge the depths of that broad and understanding human kindness ; and later on—and ever growing as she drew towards the Sunset Way through which she has passed on into the Sunrise—a wonderful sense of certainty and of a peace beyond the storms of earth held and filled the tender heart ; the mind was of a sensitiveness as great and unusual in quality as was its sanity and breadth of outlook. She has passed beyond the reach of fear into a Faith that even here was merged into sight.”

Lady Ritchie said of her :

“ She was one of those people who strike their own note in life—years only add to their influence and give a greater depth to the instinctive feeling of trust and admiration which belong to certain men and women. She was like her father, Lord Lawrence, in looks and presence. Her gracious and steadfast character always responding to life, seemed to create an atmosphere of sincerity and to give to others less steadfast than herself a sense of rest and security. She had the power of attracting and keeping the love and loyalty of those who knew her which has always been the gift of the Lawrences.”

Lord Bryce writes to her sister, the Hon. Mrs. Buxton, who had been with her brother-in-law and her niece in this supreme hour of their need :

“ It is a great grief to me to hear of the departure of your sister Emily, and I want to convey to you my very deep sympathy in such a loss.





THE HON. LADY CUNNINGHAM, 1905.

*A. G. Gabell.*

"How many you and your family have had to mourn in these last years—years of sadness to us all! Though of late I had but seldom seen your sister, the recollection of what she was before she went to India in those later years of your father's life, when I often used to meet you all, is very fresh to me.

"The recollection of her sweet graciousness and all that thoughtfulness and openness of mind which made conversation with her so great a pleasure; her attitude towards every question had that imperial elevation which belonged to your illustrious father, and it was also gentle and considerate for others. No one who was privileged to know her could ever forget the quiet charm of her presence."

To her friends the loss was great indeed, but to her husband and daughter it was irreparable. They had looked to her for that wise and loving sympathy with which she entered into all their hopes and fears. The very centre of their lives seemed now taken from them. This overwhelming sorrow, though so bravely borne, shattered Sir Henry's health.

In August 1918 he and his daughter Hermione went to Wimbledon, and after a short stay there they moved to Brighton.

Miss Ritchie writes at this time :

"I know what poignancy there must be for you in the association of the place as each day makes the sense of absence grow more. It does indeed need courage and patience to face the days when

the one whose companionship was as necessary as the sunshine itself has gone behind the veil. How well Lowell knew the unbearableness of such separation when he wrote: 'Not all the preaching since Adam can make death aught other than death.' "

The first symptoms of the illness which was to prove fatal now began to show themselves, and in October, upon his physician's advice, Sir Henry returned to London.

Miss Ferguson had been for the last two years Sir Henry's reader. She was a good musician, and her piano-playing was a great solace to him; a part of every day was devoted to music.

Sir Henry depended much on his confidential attendant and secretary, Herbert Harvey, whose life from boyhood had been spent in the service of the family. Mr. Harvey was offered a commission in the war, but he refused it and returned when the war was over to devote himself to Sir Henry and remained with him to the end. During the winter of 1918-19 Sir Henry was seriously ill, and his life was twice despaired of, but he rallied, and in the following summer he had the joy of welcoming his daughter-in-law, who had brought her sons from New Zealand to be with their grandfather and to begin their public-school career. This was a great pleasure to Sir Henry, and he spent a peaceful summer at Percy Lodge, East Sheen, which he had taken for a few months, and was able to enjoy some drives in Richmond Park. In October 1919

he returned to 83, Eaton Place, and passed a quiet winter ; but his health was obviously failing. In the afternoon he was able to receive his more intimate friends, and was cheered by conversation and music, to which latter Miss Ritchie kindly contributed.

Those who were privileged to see him carried away the impression not of blindness and suffering, but of the brightness of an unquenchable spirit that rose above all such things. The courteous welcome was there as of old, the eager interest in public affairs and in the books that were being read to him, and the constant expression of gratitude for all the love that surrounded him. A feature of the room was the presence of the big red Irish setter, Brian, who seemed to know no greater joy than to remain by his master's chair with his head resting on his knees. When Sir Henry was very ill, Brian would lie by his bed in his quiet, dignified way, and his presence gave his master great pleasure.

Sir Henry had loved to picture in his novels a devoted friendship between a father and daughter—a father who had devoted himself to the girl's education, "that higher education which is not concerned with information or accomplishments and which transcends the domain of masters and professors," and a daughter who "under his guidance became a most cultivated woman . . . and was, as her father made no secret of thinking, a delightful companion." Nothing that he had ever imagined was more perfect than the companionship which his daughter Hermione gave him and the way in which she

supplied his intellectual and spiritual needs. A letter from Sir Hesketh Bell, Governor of Mauritius, expresses what no visitor to the house could fail to notice :

“ When I spent that week-end with you, at Sheen, I could not help thinking how happy your father’s end was being made. He was fading gradually in such a beautiful and dignified atmosphere, surrounded by all that loving care and forethought could procure, and I am sure that his end was worthy of his refined and cultured life.”

Still more intimate and sacred memories are given us by the Rev. Prebendary Mackay, Vicar of All Saints’, Margaret Street :

“ I have often wished that a picture of Sir Henry Cunningham might have been painted as I saw him during my visits in the last months of his life. The picture should have shown the spacious drawing-room in which he lay on a bed so skilfully treated as to have something of the air of a chair of state. Around him portraits, marbles, artistic furnishings ; and in this appropriate setting as noble a figure as I have ever seen of an English gentleman. The picture might have given us the refined and beautiful features, the air of distinction, command, and courtesy. But much it could not have given, the charm of manner, the irrepressible humour, the delightful friendliness, and that supreme social gift which Sir Henry’s interest in humanity gave him, the gift of being really more interested in his companion than in himself.

"Miss Cunningham used to say that my visits did Sir Henry good, and I expect they did for two reasons. He kept a young mind to the last and he liked exploring any tract of country which was new to him. He liked hearing about the life and work of a London priest. He would talk to me about his own subjects and give me delightful reminiscences, but he preferred hearing about All Saints' choirboys and their jokes to talking about Queen Victoria's ministers and their policies.

"And then before I ended my visit I used to give him a little service of prayer, and this I could see was an enormous help and refreshment to him. Sir Henry had all the reticence of men of his station and upbringing about the deep things of religion. I used to gain in our prayers together a glimpse of the deep piety and humility of Sir Henry's inner life, and I believe that this short fellowship in prayer was an intense relief and help to him, that it liberated a repression and brought him a sense of the value of the fellowship of the Church."

In the summer of 1920 Sir Henry went with his daughter to a house he had taken at East Sheen, but after he had been there for a short time he became very ill and was obliged to return to 83, Eaton Place. He rallied for a little, and these few weeks were spent by him and his daughter in reading and in listening to music, which he had always loved and which now brought them both great consolation. He was very weak, but still able to see a few friends, among them the late Sir Alfred Pearce Gould, whose noble character

and constant kindness endeared him to the whole family. Mr. Gerald Ritchie writes of these days :

“ These last times that I was with your dearest father I had the sense almost that he was already far on his way. He was here—and yet he was there—and so dear was he and so fitted for that moving forward, that it seemed perfectly natural to see him with one’s eyes, and yet to know that he was almost in God’s presence. One is grateful for such an experience—for not the least part of the wonder was that even when he seemed almost in a dream he would revive and say something in his delightful, kind, humorous way which made one feel that, though far from us, he fully realised the things belonging to us who still move about in this world, which is sometimes so overwhelmingly difficult and sometimes so full of happiness.”

To those who were with him to the end, all the strength and beauty of his character were revealed. The gallant courage with which he met pain and weakness, his serenity and patience, his gaiety and wit, his gracious consideration for others, endured to the last.

On August 29 he had a fresh relapse, and very peacefully, on September 3, 1920, he passed away. A service was held on September 7 at Holy Trinity Church, Sloane Street, where the same music was sung that he had chosen for his wife. On a sunny day, amid a gathering of mourning friends, he was laid beside her in the little churchyard at Banstead.

THE END

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“ We ceased . a gentler feeling crept  
Upon us : surely rest is meet.  
‘ They rest,’ we said ; ‘ their sleep is sweet ’ ;  
And silence follow’d, and we wept.”

“ We pass ; the path that each man trod  
Is dim, or will be dim, with weeds :  
What fame is left for human deeds  
In endless age ? It rests with God.”



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